MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE: #148, 150-151, 153-154, 156 pts. 1 & 2, 160-163, 166, 172, 175, 179-197, 199-181, 184-210, 214-215, 218-227, 229-302 **See page 4 for pricing and other info.**

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL
PO BOX 460760
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146-0760

Phone (415) 923-9814
Fax (415) 923-9617
www.maximumrocknroll.com
mrr@maximumrocknroll.com

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

JUSTIN BRIGGS

INVASIÓN-La Caza-LP
BAD PARENTS-LP
RUDIMENTARY PENI-No More Pain-CD
RUNNING FOR COVER-Dark Well-LP
DEAD SECTION-World's Grey-EP
LE FACE-Salvador Dali-EP
NO FUCKER-Conquer the Innocent-EP
STRAIGHTJACKET NATION-Cheap Kicks-LP & live
VIOLENT UPRISING-LP
NOTHING PEOPLE-Anonymous-LP

TIM BROOKS

AWAY ON HOLIDAY

MITCH CARDWELL

HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Mondo Blotto-LP
NOTHING PEOPLE-Anonymous-LP
TV GHOST-LP
THE PINK NOISE-Dream Code-LP
CHOCOLAT-Gabrielle-EP
AMBER ALERTS/WIZZARD SLEEVE-split EP
PJ BONNEMAN-Jeg Kendte Dem Ikke-EP
PETS-LP
V/A-BIPPP-LP
SCARECROW & THE SHUCKERS-live

PAUL CURRAN & ARIEL AWESOME

THE ESTRANGED-Static Thoughts-LP
INSTÄNGD-Konkret Och Brutal-EP
JUGGLING JUGULARS-Salute To No One-LP
NOISEAR-Pyroclastic Annihilation-CD
SHOREBIRDS/SOMETHING'S WRONG-split EP
STRAIGHTJACKET NATION-Cheap Kicks-LP
STUPID PARTY-Technology Apology-EP
THOUSANDSWILLDIE-A Carcass...-EP
V/A-Viva Kopi-LP
AIRFIX KITS / STREET EATER-live

JONATHAN FLOYD

ANTEENAGERS M.C.-Illusions of the Teens-EP
DYNAMITE ARROWS-Blowin' It-EP
EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-CD
HEADACHE CITY-Hey Ugly-EP
LEMURIA-Get Better-CD
NANOX-Repetition-Ep
PRESS GANG-LP
STATUES-Broken Hands-EP
SASS DRAGONS-Bonkaroo-CD
Surviving Sean Dougan's attempts on my life

LAYLA GIBBON

DELIRIUM TREMENS-Presagio de Muerte-EP
MANIAX-The Lost Tapes-CD
BRAIN HANDLE-Smiling/SmilingAgain-45
NAKED RAYGUN-LP
INSTÄNGD-Konkret Och Brutal-EP
STRAIGHTJACKET NATION-Cheap Kicks-LP
GAS-LP
AMBER ALERTS/WIZZARD SLEEVE-split EP
INVASIÓN-La Caza-LP
PJ BONNEMAN-Jeg Kendte Dem Ikke-EP

CHRIS HUBBARD

INVASIÓN-La Caza-LP
BRAIN HANDLE-Smiling/SmilingAgain-45
EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-Primary Colours-CD
FUNEROT-Stranded in Time-EP
INSTÄNGD-Konkret Och Brutal-EP
MARVELOUS DARLINGS-45
NO FUCKER-Conquer the Innocent-EP
THE ESTRANGED-Static Thoughts-LP
SYSTEMATIC DEATH-both 2xLPs
STRAIGHTJACKET NATION-live

KENNY KAOS

THE FOUR SLICKS-In Bonneville-LP
HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE-Mondo Blotto-LP
WILD WEEKEND-Cosmetic Couple/Black & White-45
PLEXI 3-We Know Better-EP
POPPETS-Get Back-EP
MARVELOUS DARLINGS-45
THE FLIP-TOPS-Dangerous Game-EP
USED KIDS-Hoovercraft-EP
HEADACHE CITY-Hey Ugly-EP
ANTEENAGERS MC-Illusions of the Teens-EP

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only , or demo releases to the address on the previous page.

CAROLYN KEDDY

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING-Primary Colours-CD
BLACK TIME-Hate Songs for the Blitzkrieg Boppers-EP
BOLD ONES-Open Your Mouth-EP
ANTEENAGERS MC-Illusions of the Teens-EP
HEADACHE CITY-Hey Ugly-EP
POPPETS-Get Back-EP
THE FLIP-TOPS-Dangerous Game-EP
JAY REATARD-Singles 06 -07-CD
FIX-IT-Kill Kill Kill-LP / LE FACE-Salvador Dali-EP
X-RAY VISIONS-DVD

RAY LUJAN

THE CREEPS-Lakeside Cabin-CD
DANGERLOVES-45 / MARVELOUS DARLINGS-45
THE FLIP-TOPS-EP / STEADY STATE-CD
THE REAL DEAL-Hungover, but Dead Sober-CD
UK SUBS-Warhead-CD / SHORTCUTS-CD
LEMURIA-Get Better-CD / WILD WEEKEND-45
GOODBYE SLUGGO-Frampton Comes Alive-CD
CARRY-ONS-Is Anyone Listening?-CD
FEAR OF LIPSTICK-I Don't Wanna-EP
DIRTY TACTICS-Gangster Stamina-CD

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

ANTEENAGERS M.C.-Illusions of the Teens-EP
MARVELOUS DARLINGS-45
FLAWS-Erect Nation-LP
STATUES-Broken Hands-EP
COLA FREAKS-Ingenting Set-EP
THE MUSLIMS-Extinction/My Flash On You-45
THE MEASURE [SA]-Means To an End-EP
DANGERLOVES-Young Pretender/I Don't Know Why I Try-45
HEADACHE CITY-EP / POPPETS-EP
CHAOS IN TEJAS-fest

NICK MANGEL

DISKELMÄ-Fun is Here-LP
WART-Shuso-CD
WANKYS-The Very Best of Hero-LP
NO FUCKER-Conquer the Innocent-EP
IV REICH-Sucio Policia-2xEP
SOTATILA-Eepee-EP
GAS-LP
SYSTEMATIC DEATH-Systema vol. 1-2xLP
SYSTEMATIC DEATH-Systema vol. 2-2xLP
BAGNA/SKARPRETTER-split EP

BRUCE ROEHRS

NO FUCKER-Conquer the Innocent-EP
INVASIÓN-La Caza-LP
ANTI YOU-Johnny Bastard-EP
MARCHING ORDERS-Last Train Home-10"
MASSTRAUMA-The Adoration of the Devil's Ass-EP
ANS / REPROACH-split EP
RIPPING HEADACHE-Where Did It Go-EP
INSTANT ASSHOLE/MOUTH SEWN SHUT-split EP
TEMPLARS / STOMPER 98-live
TOMMY & THE TERRORS-live

CISSIE SCURLOCK

INVASIÓN-La Caza-LP
BRAIN HANDLE-Smiling/SmilingAgain-45
STRAIGHTJACKET NATION-LP and live
DEAD SECTION-World's Grey-EP
VIOLENT UPRISING-LP
SOTATILA-Eepee-EP
IV REICH-Sucio Policia-2xEP
SYSTEMATIC DEATH-both 2xLPs
RUDIMENTARY PENI-No More Pain-CD
DELIRIUM TREMENS-Presagio de Muerte-EP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

IV REICH-Sucio Policia-2xEP
PJ BONNEMAN-Jeg Kendte Dem Ikke-EP
INSTÄNGD-Konkret Och Brutal-EP
SATANIC THREAT-In to Hell-EP
WAR OF DESTRUCTION-EP
DELIRIUM TREMENS-Presagio de Muerte-EP
SOTATILA-Eepee-EP
INVASIÓN-La Caza-LP
STRAIGHTJACKET NATION-Cheap Kicks-LP
THE WANKYS-The Very Best of Hero-LP

ZINE TOP TEN

Always Never Fun #4
Equalizing Distort Vol. 8, #5
Fixation Street #1
Life During Wartime #9
Picaresque #3
Pudd'n Head #4
Razorcake #44
Skin Deep
Xerography Debt #23
Z Gun #2

MRR SHITWORKERS

Aragorn!
Peter Avery
Judy Balmin
Julia Booze
Dan Butler
Ariel Celeste
Craigums
Andy Darling
Sean Dougan
Jonathan Floyd
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Scott Miller
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Mark Murrmann
Jon Off A Building
Randy Ransone
Ken Sanderson
Fred Schrunk
Clint Shortfuse
Dionne Stevens
Maxwell Tremblay
Thera Webb
Sam Alvarado
Ariel Awesome
Michelle Barnhardt
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CONTRIBUTORS

Dave Adelson
Graham Booth
Arwen Curry
Bill Florio
Layla Gibbon
Chris Hubbard
Carolyn Keddy
Greg Mantooth
Allan McNaughton
Al Quint
Erika Ransom
Steve Spinali
Jason Beck
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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11, Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Part One, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Part Two, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?. The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

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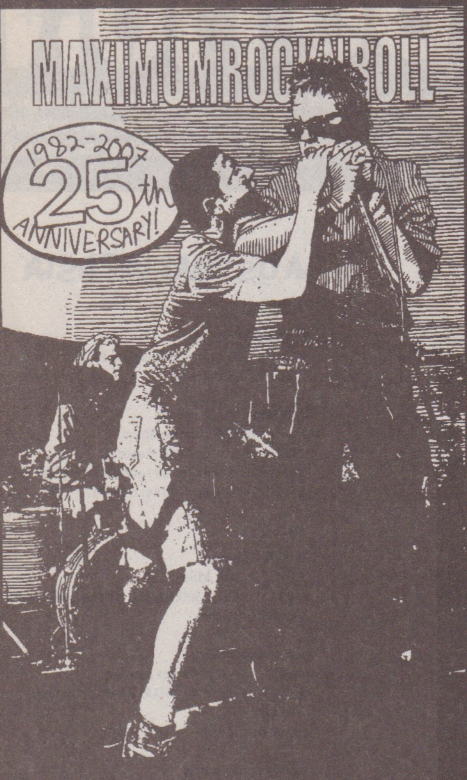
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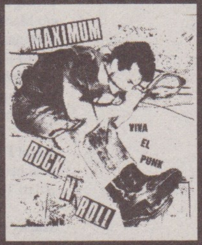
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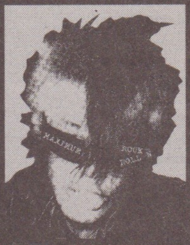
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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear MRR—

I've been missing Karl Bakla more and more these last few issues, so please, Karl come back out from wherever you are!

Okay, now just a few things about Issue #301. First off, the Red Dons interview was pretty good, but there was this one thing that pissed me off. When Doug's talking about the Clorox Girls being on BYO and how he's supportive of his friends, and how if the punks are on Myspace then they're just as complicit in supporting corporate culture as the bands that sign...Fuck you buddy! Do I get a fucking paycheck from a major if I have Ramones records? No. Do I, with my actions, support the dismantling of the independent music distribution scene that was set up over the years by punks who never had a dream of making money off their art? No. And, I know, you all are on Deranged, and good for you, I support that, and I buy your records, but don't fucking play that "all punks are hypocrites so don't pick on my friend" shit cause, *yes we are*, but I don't have different rules for my friends just cause I like them.

Second, stoked to still see the Lance Hahn articles coming, and I'd like to again publicly show amazement at the size of his heart, the depth of his dedication, and the huge crater that is empty where he used to be. RIP buddy.

And third, the columns are boring again. I don't want to read your diary. But, *MRR*, without you, I'd be even more fucked than I am, and for the effort you exert every month to make punks like me stoked and whiny and have shit to talk for the next month, I thank you.

Best,
—Karen O'Neill, San Francisco

Hi—

I was taking a dump, reading the record reviews in the June issue and I came across a review for a Franklin Cover Up record. A whole paragraph was wasted reviewing a c——-ian band. I'm sure you could have filled that space reviewing something else. Reviewing these releases only encourages said bands to submit more releases. Any press is good press. Regardless of how many of these you receive, please shitcan them.

—Andy
38-year-old long-time reader

MRR—

I just saw the review for the Youth Of Togay EP this afternoon and I had to write to any addresses I could track down through the website, and the fact that Fred Schrunk is reviewing records and no longer setting toys on fire with gasoline—I'm writing to whomever I can find from *MRR* (if you could forward this to Jaime, that would be awesome) who may have read or heard about his review, the band Youth Of Togay, or the news of Bridge Nine being the big bad wolf of racist or anti-GLBT thugs.

Youth Of Togay is the brainchild of Pat Clement (FNS), who is a former intern at Bridge Nine. He wanted to come in and learn about how labels worked so his own FNS Records could benefit form the experience. Regardless of Pat's past transgressions and painful anecdotes that have no bearing on this situation (one favorite highlight is that he traded his dog for a case of PBR), he stole records from Bridge Nine and created fake pressing versions to dupe collector kids and sold them online and in stores. When this was discovered, he was told to leave as fast as he could. Obviously, he has a vendetta against anyone affiliated with our label or on our label because of this and he has since left the state.

Youth of Togay is an obvious dig at our band, Have Heart, and Bridge Nine specifically. The entire crux of this band and this situation is that Pat was never gay. Ever. Even the bi-sexual thing he casually throws out is out of convenience and a bullshit, non-committal way just to rationalize a band that is flat out offensive and in reality, not at all funny. Regardless of who he "pays homage" to, in cover or in song, he's not gay, so the "joke" is worth only so much. When "The Gaychinist" went up, I contacted Purevolume and they pulled the page in minutes because the person who worked there that I spoke with was gay and completely insulted. "Even if he was gay, this isn't funny," was the quote. With Myspace, a former intern who *didn't* steal records from us handled that one. Revelation (who had no objection to Gayrilla Biscuits) distributed the YOT 7" and I told them about the situation and they made their own decision based on an email very similar to this one. Pat can profess whatever ideologies he wants, release whatever he wants on FNS, but anyone who knows the real story or knows him wants nothing to do with him and doesn't buy it for a second.

Bridge Nine never did any "major label" bullshit towards Pat. We never sued him, we never even sent him a cease & desist as he claims. We actually never had any correspondence with him directly as it was a waste of time. Our only real "press" contacts until this time were the queerpunks blog who aired a diatribe from Pat, then interviewed him, but curiously, they interviewed us and somehow, never aired our responses in full last I remember—I haven't checked in a while. Have Heart and Bridge Nine were offended only because it was an obvious and pathetic move by a person who deserved no help in airing his trite and fake message, and it wasn't done well, or funny. Have Heart, if you ever get to meet them, is five *very* un-macho people who are nice, genuine, humble and honest. They're not arrogant. They're not assholes, and they're not the prototypes of "Boston tough guys." They're all college-educated kids who are still coming to grasp the concept that their little hardcore band has been able to bring them to five continents. As for Bridge Nine, everyone who works here is respectful of all kinds of lifestyles, whether you are a man or woman and you want to have a loving relationship with a man, woman or couch cushion with a picture of Carl Cordova's face on it (tell Carl that Karl from Holding On says hello and that couch and I are no longer together). In reality, I am fully confident that the actions in my life (sans setting those toys on fire with Fred in middle school), the lives of our employees, and the lives of those in Have Heart and our families are lived in a way that do more to promote a society in which homosexuality is not only accepted, but embraced as another aspect of modern life than Youth Of Togay ever will. Pat turns the gay lifestyle into a gimmick and while I'm not gay myself, I would imagine those who are, would find the band pretty disgusting.

Feel free to hit me up if you have any more questions or to say hello because I'm all about conversations, dialogues, and amusing myself on Saturday nights with the occasional sarcastic references to people I haven't seen in four or five years.

Take it easy and have a good night
—Karl

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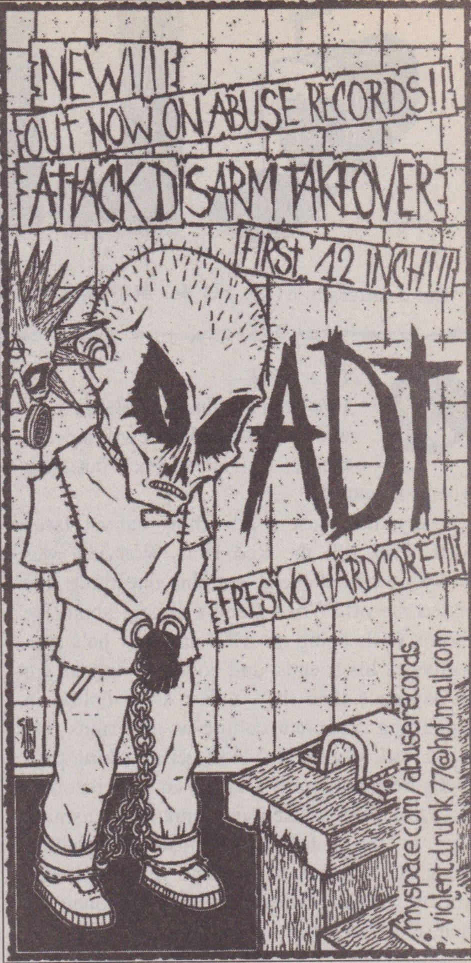
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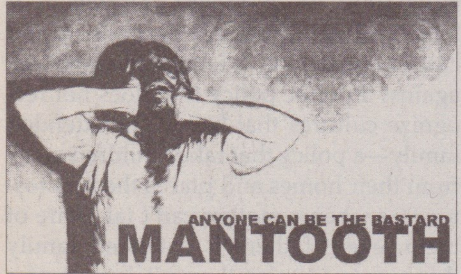

ANYONE CAN BE THE BASTARD

MANTOOTH

Rarely, if anything, besides a frothy beer gives me joy (I hate myself and I have problems), so it's always nice to go to a grocery store outside of Pennsylvania, because, unlike the one I currently reside in, most other states understand a man's need to drown his problems like unwanted children in a bathtub. But in this case it is not a bathtub but a bottle of some sorts, maybe a mug. I'm not going to get too detailed here because I am not a cop, and therefore I do not have great knowledge of "the law." In Pennsylvania, grocery stores are not allowed to sell beer. It is bullshit, but I guess it could be worse. That's the short of it. Unfortunately, "the short of it" is capitulation, so I guess I take that back—I guess it could not be any worse. In fact, I loathe my pathetic first world existence and pray to any god out there that a wayward SUV careens through the front of my house and crushes me under the weight of its immense symbolism.

Anyhow, let's rewind to March 22nd, 2007. I'm on the first leg of the Brain Handle tour in Phoenix, AZ. At this point, you would probably expect me to describe Phoenix in the grimmest terms possible—"It is a festering shitsack of greed and depression. At every turn you trip over clumpy mounds of flesh and bones that you can only guess are the remains of humans and dogs caught mid coitus in some flash of instant death. The buildings appear as if they erupted out of the ground to serve only to shield any accidental visitors the pain of seeing that they are in the middle of unending, desperate nothingness."

But that would be hyperbole and I would never allow such a gross exaggeration to enter my column. The fact is that Phoenix unfortunately resembles most of US—flat and composed mostly of strip malls. If you were to travel directly to Phoenix for the first time, having never been anyone else in the states, you'd perhaps be stricken by the sheer unremarkable nature of the whole place. You would say, "It's a dry heat, though," just like everyone else, and attempt to find a reason to go inside where there is air conditioning…just like everyone else.

We had to get up early that day, so we found a Whole Foods where we could get some semblance of breakfast. Bret (AKA "Mr. Afternoon") and I used it as an excuse to peruse their fancy beer selection because we never get the chance to do such a thing at 7:00 a.m. in Pennsylvania AKA Straightedgefacistlvania. I pick out a few things, and after that I'm not exactly clear on how I ended up consuming 32 ounces of Stonyfield Farms yogurt and a half gallon of orange juice. Perhaps I was confused and thought I had a yeast infection and scurvy to deter. Maybe I was distracted by the fact that Mr. Afternoon bought nothing to eat for breakfast but instead went to the van to read an issue of Harper's and drink some expensive Belgian ale. La Fraction showed up shortly thereafter, and were seemingly unfazed by his defiance of conventional Breakfast Rules; probably because they come from France where freedom is not understood, and therefore Breakfast does not exist and/or is used as an excuse to get drunk.

Things become a little hazy after this point because my stomach was swollen with yogurt and juice, but I remember being in a Guitar Center afterwards, or maybe I was actually dying and had briefly been cast into Hell where devils wearing silky button-up shirts with flames printed all over them called me "brah."

As I traveled through the yogurty fog, I remember standing in a record store watching Mr. Afternoon drink a bottle of Orval concealed in a brown paper bag, flipping through records. Someone says to him, "Bret, I don't think you're allowed to drink in here."

"Well that fuckin' guy over there is drinking in here, why can't I?"

Sure enough there was a man standing across the stacks drinking a beer concealed in a brown paper bag. That's the last thing I can recollect and I travel through time two hours.

When I finally awoke, I was sitting in some shitty restaurant that looked like Hard Rock Café and TGI Fridays had had sex and subsequently aborted the result. I looked around at all Rock 'n' Roll "memorabilia" on the walls—Geezer Butler's Ibanez? A street sign for "Bob Dylan Road," and an awful lot of Alice Cooper's face? Then I noticed that all the waiters and waitresses were wearing half-assed Alice Cooper face paint, kind of like if they tried to look like the gatefold of "Love it to Death," but stopped halfway. I realized I was at ALICE COOPERSTOWN. Ac-cording to their website, it is the premier restaurant in downtown Phoenix *"Where Jocks and Rock Meet!"* If millions of years of human evolution have taught us anything, isn't it that these two groups should never meet? I could cite numerous examples of where they *do* meet (Devourment and their fans), but it would just reduce this column to nothing more than an incoherent string of swears and sobbing.

Anyway, you would expect that restaurant plastered with Alice Cooper's fascist face and wallpapered with phony/inconsequential relics from Rock 'n' Roll history would at least provide whimsical names for their food items. *The Ballad of Dwight French Fries. Billion Dollar Baby Back Ribs. Greasy Action.* No. Not in the least. *Not in the motherfucking least.* Instead, everyone in Brain Handle (aside from Andy and myself) ordered *The Steve Martin Margarita, The Dean Martin*

Martini, The Tom Arnold Slurry of Alcoholic Bile, The Dave Mustaine Pint Glass Full of Tears. I also believe some *French Fries* and some *Nachos* were ordered.

Our waiter was a delightful chap who probably spends his off hours being that token dude at parties that talks to you like you've been total "brahs" for years even though you two just met. Well, I wouldn't say, "met" since he's just cornering you, talking *at* you. After he leaves Cooperstown at the end of his shift, his nightly mission is giving some lucky girl mediocre sex and HPV. He's also the kind of guy that when you tell him it's Mr. Afternoon's birthday, even though it isn't, he offers to "have one of the waitresses give him a lapdance."

"No, we'd prefer some ice cream."

"They give really good lapdances, brah."

"…"

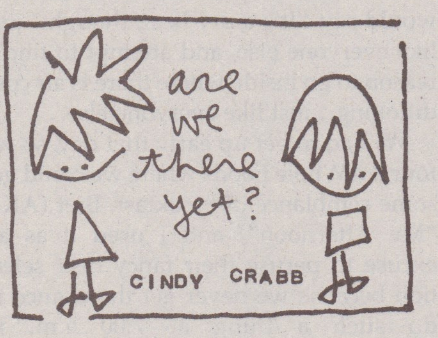
And on top of that he brought us two *Steve Martin Margaritas* and not *The Dean Martin Martini*. He would later try to charge us for his mistake, so we snitched on that motherfucker because our bill was already pushing $200.

Afterwards we all split up and wander around downtown Phoenix for a few hours. My quest was to find some secluded alley or hole where I could peacefully take an enormous shit. I stumbled into the lobby of the Hiyat where I was met with icy glares from the staff, who somehow knew that I had not brushed my teeth in days and that my bowels were brimming with poo. I had "tour breath" like never before, and I thought that I could veil it with some Vitamin Water, but it just seemed to make it worse. I shuffled up to someone who probably didn't even work there and asked where I could find a "nice restroom." The words escaped my mouth like a punctured vacuum bag; a puff of miasma gently unfurled at the brow of the unfortunate man sitting at the bench. He feebly raised a finger towards the clearly visible signs right behind me without saying a word. I turned without thanking and disappeared for at least 45 minutes.

Later we all coalesce in front of the baseball stadium to watch the Diamondbacks play The Rockies. We're given some snappy hats at the entrance and told that if we fill out 50 All-Star Game ballots that we would be given a free bobblehead toy of some baseball player that is probably popular somewhere. Thus began *our struggle* to acquire as many bobbleheads as possible. At the end of the day we had sufficiently annoyed as many stadium workers as possible and walked away with seven toys and, you know, memories.

And if you were expecting some kind of play-by-play of the game, you should perhaps reevaluate your values and realize that baseball is *really boring*. Don't get me wrong (don't you fucking dare get me wrong)—I love going to games, but only because they provide me the opportunity to get free hats and bobblehead toys. But I'm sure someone will levy the argument against me that reading this column has been like sitting through a baseball game.

Cum and get me: gregory.mantooth@gmail.com



My Punk Heroes #3

Sophie (not her real name)

I've never actually met Sophie, but we've written letters off and on for a few years. She was involved in clinic defense in the '80s and '90s, taught self-defense at the YWCA, started a women's health group that learned menstrual extraction, and currently is a mother and emergency room nurse.

Q: Could you explain what menstrual extraction is?

A: The short answer is that menstrual extraction is a self-care/group-care technique for removing the contents of the uterus.

Q: And the long answer?

A: Menstrual extraction is the belief that women and people with uteruses have the right to control our own fertility, but that's putting it in the language of our oppressors. It is the belief that women have always taken care of each other, and that this ability to care has been ripped from us by a racist, capitalist patriarchy. It is the practice of taking back our knowledge, our birthright, our ability to turn to each other for assistance in our times of need, and our physical knowledge of how to help each other end a pregnancy in a caring, nurturing, honoring way.

Menstrual extraction is a small part of a much larger struggle for full reproductive freedom—a struggle that includes fighting against domestic violence, rape culture, forced sterilization, medical experimentation on the poor, inaccessibility to healthy food and water, criminalization of pregnant addicts… It includes fighting against the political and cultural push to give fetuses personhood; against a public policy that does not recognize cultures that believe in extended family—a policy that takes children away from their homes and places them in foster care when a mother can't take care of them, even if there is extended family that wants to raise them. It is part of a struggle that includes continuing to fight against the laws that limit women's access to abortion, and fighting against the politically motivated obsession with shaming women for ending pregnancies.

Q: How does it work? What makes it different from abortion?

A: It is a procedure that was developed by women who were part of the self-care movement of the '70s, when abortion was illegal. Basically, you have a jar with an airtight lid with two tubes coming out of it. One tube goes to a syringe with a bypass valve on it (this will allow air to be pulled from the jar, creating a vacuum. The valve keeps the air from being pushed back up). You can also use a certain kind of brake bleeding kit for this. The other tube connects to a plastic cannula, which is what is used at most abortion clinics, but in a menstrual extraction you use the smallest cannula possible for the size of pregnancy. It works the same way as a suction abortion, only the suction is gentler, the movements are gentler, and it takes longer.

What makes it different is a huge question. At this point in history, clinics are so pressed and struggling, that they are generally not able to give people the best care possible. People working at clinics are amazingly dedicated people, and I want to honor all the wonderful work they are doing. I think there is a lot of potential in clinics—my first abortion was in Vermont, when nurse practitioners were still allowed to perform them, and the experience I had there was very caring and empowering, but most clinics are under tremendous stress and pressure.

There are a lot of things that make menstrual extraction different, and different people practice menstrual extraction in different ways. I can only really talk about how we did them. Our group was very committed to making it a healthy process for all people involved. This meant we talked a lot within our own group—we explored our deep and changing feelings about pregnancy termination. I think when we started out, we all felt pretty much like it was this politically righteous thing to do—we came to it with a lot of anger about patriarchy, and we mostly felt like fetuses were growths inside of us, and it shouldn't have to be a big deal to terminate. As time went on, lots of us experienced sadness and confusing feelings about what we were doing. Even when we felt, logically, that pregnancy termination was perfectly fine, many of us had to come to understand our role in different ways.

Different cultures have different ways of envisioning the end of pregnancy. There are ways to honor the loss without giving it a moral dimension. We studied as much as we could, and came up with our own rituals and customs to help us process our feelings. And when the anger about patriarchy waned, the sadness of that came up too. It is so fucking sad, the way so many of us are not empowered enough to be able to have only wanted sex, or to be able to advocate for ourselves with our partners or hook-ups for proper birth control. I, personally, have not been able to advocate for myself, and facing that and seeing that in other people is painful.

I really recommend the book *Help for the Helper: The Psychophysiology of Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma,* by Babette Rothschild. She also wrote a book called *The Body Remembers: The Psychophysiology of Trauma and Trauma Treatment*, that I like.

Q: So, if someone came to you for help, what happened?

A: Well, first one of us would meet with her and determine if our group, and this procedure, would be a good match for her. One of the determining factors would be how far along she was in her pregnancy—we usually just worked with people who weren't past eight weeks from their last menstrual period, or six weeks from conception. So that was a big question, but there were lots of other things too. Clinics have a lot of resources we didn't have—like certain kinds of pain management drugs and antibiotics—and a clinical procedure is less of a commitment. For someone to work with us, we really needed them to be able to commit to being part of our group for about a month: staying in town and in touch on a daily basis, doing pre-care herbs and nutritive work, and post-care communication and herbs and nutrition. We needed her to be able to stay present in her body and to communicate about what was going on during and after the procedure. For some people, this is not the best option.

We did a lot of counseling work, when that was appropriate, and also talked extensively with her partner, if appropriate—or if she had a support person, we talked with them. If her main reason for wanting to do a menstrual extraction instead of a clinical was money reasons, then we tried to help her get money for a clinical abortion. I really feel like our work was helping women get the kind of care they wanted, and to support them in their decision.

For many people, terminating pregnancy is a lonely, scary time where a lot of emotions come up. We were committed to helping women feel safe and supported in all of it. I think being in a community of support during difficult decisions can make all the difference, and can be extremely transformative. I know when I had two of my abortions, and I went alone and dealt with it alone, it reinforced my deeply felt feeling that no one would ever be there for me, and that I couldn't ask anyone for help. Being part of a menstrual extraction self-care group helped me unlearn those thought patterns. It also helped me finally to be able to trust myself in my body enough to be able to advocate for myself and stop getting pregnant when I didn't want to, and to be able to make a decision, eventually, to have children.

It's hard to say what is different about menstrual extraction and clinics, because there is just so much. Menstrual extraction is done at the woman's own home, surrounded by things she loves and hopefully people who love her. Or, if she didn't want it at her house, we did it at one of ours. Personally, I think that menstrual extraction is less physically traumatic than clinical abortions, partially because she feels and processes the pain as it is going. If it was a long procedure, we took breaks and talked, ate, rested. It is different because she was really part of what was going on.

Many people who go to clinics feel like the abortion is something that is being done to them, being done against them almost. It reinforces a lot of the guilt that people often unwillingly feel. For many people it can bring up abuse history issues. With menstrual extraction, we put the power back into her hands. She was able to say if she wanted to stop. We talked about visioning tools to use to move through abuse memories. She was conscious, and our support people helped her to stay present in her body and to communicate about what she was feeling. I think this can be really transformative in other areas of life.

Q: It seems like lots of people were involved in women's health groups in the '80s and not so much anymore. What do you think has caused this?

A: I think it was partially the backlash against feminism in general, and partially a backlash against some of the in-your-face tactics of punk women to raise issues of sexism within the punk scene. I also think that capitalism is amazingly good at co-opting and taking momentum out of any struggle for interdependence. Also, within the punk scene there was a lot of essentialist feminism, which thankfully is getting replaced by a really wonderful and vibrant genderqueer and transgender movement.

Punks and activists are focusing on issues that we weren't focusing on then—like anti-gentrification and anti-racism, and I am really happy for that too. But I do still see women and young punks struggling with the same sexism I did. There is still so much self-hate and body hate, and I think health-groups are really great places to work in these areas, which then lead us to have a more embodied self, which then helps us stay involved in the struggle long-term. I have seen a lot of burnout.

When we were doing menstrual extraction, I thought it would just spread and spread until every town had many groups who had this knowledge, and the stigma of pregnancy termination would be ended, and we could all become so incredible. I thought it would just continue to strengthen the pro-girl movement that was going on. Honestly, I don't really know what happened. I would like to see it resurrected. I know being involved in a health group really helped so many people I knew.

Q: Why did you quit doing it?

A: Eventually I became afraid of the legal backlash, because although it is in many respects similar medically to catheter insertion, which is a home health-care technique, obviously menstrual extraction would not been seen so benignly. I think once my daughter is grown up, I'll probably try and start another group.

assimilate
my
purse
mattilda, a.k.a.
matt bernstein sycamore

Anything Was Possible

A shift in the texture of the air

Sometimes I wish I could let go of sex, maybe desire would become something else, like lying in the grass and holding the sky. I've been trying to regain a sense of liberation in my own sexuality, but I find myself trapped by the usual unsatisfying options and the lack of space to create what I really want.

For weeks now I've been trying to think of this particular phrase, something like, "It's over, but grander and more eloquent" like, "The love is gone but it never was love," so I just get stuck trying to figure out how to say that I don't know if there's any hope for me in public sex anymore. I mean, beyond the possibility for the moment to transcend— even that is rarer and rarer now, and maybe that's what I mean by "the love is gone." I think I did used to love it, now all I can feel is the lack, and I do think things have changed, especially the way guys walk around with a shopping list like they're checking off boxes, and there's the internet, an overwhelming public space, but also maybe I've changed. And I need something else.

I understand why so many fags give up on sex, or give up hoping that sex will become anything other than something lost, over and over again this loss, or maybe I mean lack, this sense that something is lacking, and some people go to great lengths to keep it that way. Others just follow the rules, and the rest of us slowly lose our sense that sex will ever illuminate anything else.

I understand why people hold onto relationships that aren't working—at least there's something to hold onto. Something grounding in the gestures of the familiar, even when the familiar keeps you still when you want to keep moving, and moving when you want to keep still. I hold onto my relationship to public sex, and I'm unwilling to let go of the dream that it can become more, more of what I'm dreaming. I've been holding onto that dream for almost twenty years now, really, twenty years. I just realized it's been twenty years—that's a long time. Starting somewhere in those first bathrooms when I was fourteen, I always hoped that somehow I'd meet someone like me. I mean I was there, so what about someone else? I'm not sure that's ever happened, and I'm not sure it ever will. The culture is only changing for the worse, I mean the culture of public sex and the way its limitations become strictures.

I don't want to let go of the way sex in public is what sex means to me, more than the gestures, it's the possibility of a shift in the texture of the air. I don't want to give up, but sometimes I can feel the air changing anyway, this air inside me. And sometimes that means my desire feels empty and pointless, a rush that only leads me to walls. I'm so sick of walls. But sometimes I can sense something else—a difference in the way that I hold desire, and maybe that means eventually it will hold me.

But wait

Everything is different when I'm looking through the glory hole at this guy sucking someone's cock, then up at the scruffy guy towering above him, soft white belly pushing exposed underneath t-shirt, dark hair and a small tattoo at the hip and I'm breathing harder so they can hear me, but also so I can breathe harder, and the guy is looking down at me, I'm smiling until the guy sucking decides to stand up and lean his back up against the glory hole. Hey, you're blocking my view, I say, and I start poking at his jeans, softly, and then they both start zipping up.

Listen, I was playing by the rules, just watching politely and moaning a little, and the good news is that whatever for that bitch pushing her jeans-covered ass up against my view, 30 more seconds and the guy's in my booth. Wow I'm a much more ravenous cocksucker that's for sure, that's what I'm thinking, but also I'm not thinking and that's what's good. After a while he reaches down for my dick and then I'm standing up, lips onto his neck cigarettes and liquor I'm still enjoying it This is where I realize he really likes jerking, so eventually I'm jerking it all into my throat and then I stand up and place his hand underneath my balls and do the thrusting until I'm giving this show. I like the way I can just come like that, right up against the wall right after him of course, it's because I've been holding it.

The best part is his smile afterwards, just a smile nothing and everything else, I'm smiling too. Then there's some guy sticking his dick through the glory hole, probably it's the guy who was making belching noises earlier and I'm not horny anymore but I start jerking him off anyway, then I suck for a moment or two, but why? So I say I'm feeling tired, but thanks, and he looks down through the hole and I reach through to touch his cheek and he says come over here.

So then I'm over there, and I say it again: I'm too tired right now, he asks, how could you be tired in that outfit? I'm working the contrasting plaids and he's a short guy in his 40s probably, but with swept-back prep school hair. I kiss him on the neck a few times and then on the lips, and afterwards I'm thinking about how desire in these places can bring me close to people I might not otherwise encounter—close if they're not pulling back the whole time and sometimes close anyway. Like when I said, you're blocking my view, and saying what I was actually feeling brought me what I was looking for—of course that doesn't usually happen, but the important thing is to say it anyway.

Anything was possible

Sometimes you have a dream and that dream infuses everything your relationships are part of, and the dream is part of your relationships and everything is hard but it's the dream that means you'll be okay. And then that dream is over, or no the dream is the same, or maybe not the same but similar—it's the relationships that are over, or not all of the relationships, but some of them. Maybe it's harder to dream, or maybe it's just harder. Or maybe some things are easier, but not dreaming. Or you're definitely not okay, but you're okay with dreaming. Or you're just not okay, is that okay?

Maybe the dream is love. Love, which is a commitment. Or maybe the dream is commitment, commitment, which is love. Like running into the traffic islands near Dupont Circle and RuPaul's Supermodel is playing. You better work, this is the height of Supermodel, turn to the right, I mean when RuPaul became a pop celebrity, and you know it's cheesy but you're doing runway anyway, runway in the town where you grew up but you couldn't dream. They wouldn't let you. Now you've gathered with a million queers or mostly gays and lesbians, gays and lesbians whose dreams are so limited you feel further away than ever but you're dreaming.

I met him at an ACT UP protest. I remember he came right up to me in the sun with such a sweetness, we were both nineteen, I liked the tiny little silver dot in his nose, the way his eyes sparkled, even his braces I thought they looked cute. We got arrested together and we did runway to RuPaul and then we got bashed together, my eyes so red I thought it was spraypaint, right next to the 24 hour restaurant I used to go to in high school. All of this was big, these were big things, but then I went back to San Francisco and he went back to Michigan and we wrote letters, beautiful elaborate letters—that's what people did in the early '90s.

He was my first boyfriend, the first person to hold me when I was having incest flashbacks. We broke down a lot then broke up and broke down and everything was difficult but we knew we were building something in the ruins, that was us the ruins. We wanted to create a world we could live with. A lot of the people I believed in then I no longer believe in now, of course we've all changed and some of us have different dreams. So it's not unique that my first boyfriend and I don't talk anymore, don't talk because I stopped believing in his promises, his promises that we were family not just ruins. It took me almost ten years. I mean ten years to let him go, not as a boyfriend, I mean that lasted a year, but as something more: hope. Now I like running into him from time to time, but there are no more dreams.

Today I heard something that I'm still trying to process. I mean it makes me sad and I don't know what else to think. Maybe I feel conflicted—conflicted because it makes me so sad, and then I think it shouldn't make me so sad. Why this investment in his life choices? In this case, it's a bare-backing video.

I want to back up for a moment and say that when we went out, we were absolutely meticulous about safe sex. Soon it would be called safer, and that made more sense, but at the time we even used Kiss of Mint condoms for sucking cock. Looking back, I wonder if our dedication to the rules could only exist in such a pure form because we came of age almost certain that we'd eventually die of AIDS. Isn't that what happened to everyone like us? Still we wanted to beat the odds, and we wanted to dream, remember dreaming? This wasn't monogamy or anything silly like that, we didn't believe in such ownership spectacles. We were sluts and sure, soon enough our ideas of sexual safety would change too, but not our ethics, I mean I didn't believe our ethics had changed until now.

As far as I'm concerned, bare-backing videos participate in a culture of nihilism and selfishness that is one of the grossest manifestations of a gay sexual culture that has given up on any vision of communal care. I won't pretend that bare-backing videos don't turn me on—lots of things that disgust me turn me on. What frightens me is the way in which they actively promote loyalty to condomless sex as the One True Vision of sexual satisfaction. And not condomless sex as part of a safer sex regimen, but the type where come must be unloaded deep within stretched anal orifices, as the camera waits for it all to squirt back into our vision. A negotiated decision to have sex without condoms is a different story, a story never portrayed in the unquestioning, masculinity-drenched fantasies of bareback porn.

I can't help thinking that bareback videos are about giving up, even if I watch them and I don't give up. I mean I'm still committed to safer visions of sexual splendor. I'm struck by the thought that nothing was missing from the sex I had with that first boyfriend. Because anything was possible: that's what we believed.

The expanded second edition of *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* is finally out!!!!!!!!!!!!! Get it while you can—the first edition sold out almost immediately after it was originally released at the end of 2004... You can also check in on me via my blog, nobodypasses.blogspot.com. These days I'm the reviews editor at the brilliant new feminist magazine *Make/shift*, where I also have a column but only twice a year (that's how often the magazine comes out). I live for feedback, so send me love letters and/or delicious threats via my new homepage, www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past *MRR* columns. Or you can write to me at 537 Jones St, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102

Världskrig
Nick Mangel

I have had some trouble finding the time to write my last few columns, and some associated trouble getting myself organized in terms of what to write about. I'd be lying if I said I felt I had my shit together this month. I have been a bit out of touch lately with music and the international scene. I have been preoccupied with work, relationships (in a good way!), travel, moving, trying to release records, keeping my meditation practice going, and other stuff. I have to admit, the DIY punk scene stuff hasn't been too prominent in my mind lately. If anything, it comes up when I feel guilty for not having more information to share in this column. But you know, all this has had me thinking about how, at times, "life" and our subsequent responsibilities, can be more important than punk rock. Punk is always a part of me, regardless of what I am doing.

When I think about it, the times when I have been most productive, DIY/scene-wise, is when I had virtually nothing else to do: e.g., high school, or being unemployed, or employed part-time. Of course, I am sure if it weren't for these three delightful life phases, we wouldn't have a scene. Other than a few insanely energetic and motivated people who manage to work full-time—sometimes even with kids and families—it's usually those with copious free time on their hands who manage to do the zines and records, book the shows, and make the scene what it is. Certainly there are those driven people who run themselves ragged but still manage to do it—I don't deny that at all. I respect it, tremendously. I know some people manage to stay connected by making it part of their "job" to do things like selling records via mailorder or at shows, so they're at least financially connected to things, which makes sense in its own way. For me, the struggle involves staying in contact with people, and definitely balancing other parts of my life with my passion for DIY punk.

Sometimes staying involved means modifying how you do it. For me, the internet has been a godsend, because I honestly can't imagine doing what I did in high school—corresponding by handwriting letters—when now finding information is a keystroke away.

Staying involved is hard—especially when life sort of bottlenecks, and a ton of responsibilities and shit land on you at once. I can see how when some people's lives get complicated, they can drift away from things without even knowing it. But I am constantly reminded of being different, and of how much that difference relates to my punk identity. I can't forget it.

Work, for me, is a distraction. I work at a hospital that's bustling with people, sick and not, fire alarms going off, cranky surgeons and stressed out nurses. I am lucky to have the freedom I do in a medical job, which is rare, and I do often manage to have peace and quiet. I can manage my workload. I consider myself fortunate in that way, and even still I find it hard to organize myself to do the things I want to do outside of work. I know that could say more about my organizational skills than anything else! But I see what it's like for the majority of working people—for example, employees in my workplace have to go home and decompress for hours just to be able to get up the next day and do it all over again. I don't really have to do that most of the time. And in most cases, working full-time is necessary for people who have families to take care of, or for people who want to be able to eat or live in a place other than a squat or hovel.

But I also realize that things always change. That's the only guarantee in life, really. And I realize that things will stabilize, and that in all likelihood I'll be back here in the next few months with columns that have more to say than some emo-y column about how busy I am! Sorry! Hehe.

BTW, The SCUM NOISE LP is out *now*!!!

Nick Daniels PO BOX 18884 Oakland, CA 94619
nickmangel@gmail.com

George Tabb sez
Take my life, please!
MRR: Do you get

"You toured all over California?" asks this punk kid from San Diego, as I'm busy stealing police cars with him out of the back of a cop station.

Our plan is to make it to the airport, steal the helicopter, and blow the shit out of the jerks riding around in the SUV near Middle Park.

"Yeah," I explain, "years ago, with F.Y.P., who are now TTK, or Toys That Kill."

We make it to the airport, but are met by the fuckheads in the SUV, who ambush us with a freaking rocket launcher.

As we die a burning death in Grand Theft Auto IV, I figure I will tell the kid the story as we re-spawn.

"So there I was..." I begin.

***

"Beep, beep, beep," said my chicken as I pulled it out of my leather jacket pocket.

"George," said Michael, from the front seat of the van, "tell your bird to shut up, I'm trying to get some rest!"

I looked at Michael, my drummer, with his F.Y.P. baseball cap on, and his red Dick Army t-shirt that he had been wearing for like five days in a row.

"I think my chicken is hungry," I explained to Michael, "or maybe it just wants me to read to it."

"What the fuck are you talking about, George?" asked Todd, the lead singer of F.Y.P., and driver of the van.

"My chicken, man," I said, "it's lonely."

"Dude," said Stoots, bass player of F.Y.P., "I gotta get me one of those. Yours is cool, and so is Sean's!"

Sean is the drummer of F.Y.P., and was seated on the van floor next to me, along with Stoots and our merch guy, Rall. Evan was in the loft.

"I like mine," said Sean, "but I can't seem to keep it alive."

"Ya gotta keep loving it, dude," I say to Sean, "the key is love and attention."

Sean just nodded his head.

My chicken beeped again.

"George," said Evan from up in the loft of the van with his roll of toilet paper for his runny nose, "I need rest. If you don't tell that thing to shut-up, I'm gonna choke your chicken."

"You guys are really into that stuff," said Todd, as he drove the van along the freeway toward Atascadero, "it's good when a band can touch and hold one another."

"Todd," I yell, "he's talking about my chicken. He's referring to my virtual pet. We don't hold each other's dicks like you guys do!"

I'd seen Todd grab his band's members a few times on the tour.

"Well, um," stammered Todd, "um, you New Yorkers are, um, errr, I dunno."

"Good come-back Todd," remarked Rall, as he lit up yet another smoke.

"Thanks!" said Todd, proudly. We all shut up.

***

We arrived in Atascadero a few hours later. We were supposed to play in Santa Barbara, but the show got moved for some stupid reason of which I have no idea. All I knew is that before, we were going to play a big club called The Living Room, and now, we were playing a small coffee house called Scurvy's.

"Everyone out," said Todd, as he slid open the side door of the van and we all loaded out.

As soon as I got into some light, I took my virtual pet out of my pocket and checked it. Its health was fine, but it needed some studying and food, and love. So I pushed a bunch of buttons, and it beeped and bleeped, and then looked at me and smiled.

I had received my pet about a week earlier from My Future Ex-Wife. On the package it said it was a "virtual puppy". They lied. It was whatever it wanted to be. The unit the pet lived in was the size of a half-dollar, and the pet itself was made up of a LCD read out.

"Now George," said My Future Ex-Wife, when she gave me the gift, "If you can keep your puppy alive and happy, maybe someday you can get a real dog!"

I thanked her and promised that my dog would be the best dog ever. Better than Lassie and Rin Tin Tin—more heroic than Benji, and more punk than Cujo.

But three days later my "dog" turned into a chicken.

"Whatcha doin?" asked Sean, as I stood on the sidewalk pushing buttons and making my chicken happy.

"Well," I explained to him, "I am pushing the book symbol, and that educates the chicken."

"Uh huh," said Sean.

"Now I'm pushing the dice game symbol," I explained to Sean as I began to push buttons again, "the game is to make the chicken happy. When it's happy, it smiles, and then its love force grows. It likes me to gamble."

"Yup," said Sean.

"And now," I said, "I'm pushing buttons to make it eat hamburgers. Chickens like hamburgers. It makes them happy. Yum, yum."

"Uh huh," said Sean.

I looked at him. Drummer. This all made sense to him.

"How's your pet?" I asked him.

"Just died again," was his answer.

***

We watched some local bands play in the coffee house, and then Evan and I took a walk to a nearby pizza place to get something to drink.

On our way back to the club we ran into a very cute girl with bleached blonde hair seated on the sidewalk.

"Can I have a sip?" she asked me as I gulped down my Diet Coke.

"You don't have diseases, do you?" I asked her, half serious.

"I just got tested for HIV, and I'm clean," was her answer.

Whatever.

"My name is April," said the girl, as Evan and I sat down next to her on the sidewalk.

"I'm George," I said, "and that's my bass player, Evan."

"Are you guys in a band?" she asked, as her eyes suddenly lit up.

I explained to her that we were in Furious George, and we were playing Scurvy's in about a half hour or so.

"Cool," she said, "that place is rad. I scored some speed in there earlier, and now I'm all cranked."

"Cool," I said.

"Stupid Idiot" was what I felt like saying.

Suddenly my chicken started to beep.

"What's that?" asked April, as she sat on the sidewalk drinking my Diet Coke.

I pulled out my chicken and showed it to her.

"That's so cute," she said, and her face lit up again, "my old boyfriend got me one that was a puppy, it was so cute!"

"Mine's supposed to be a puppy," I said, depressed.

"It looks like a chicken," she told me, and then went on to explain that she sold her virtual puppy to some drug dealer guy for a bag of speed.

Evan and I continued to talk to her for a while until my cell phone beeped.

"What's that?" asked the girl, again.

"That's my cell phone," I said, taking it out of my leather jacket pocket and answering it.

"Well at least that looks like a cell phone," she said.

"Thanks," was my reply.

***

An hour later, after we played our set to a bunch of wild kids slamming around and yelling for us to do rap songs, which we did, I found myself back on the sidewalk next to April.

"You are really cute," she said to me.

I told her she was too.

"I want you to meet my friend, Lizzie," she said, and then motioned for a cute brunette to come over and join us. The girl with the brown hair did, and sat on the other side of me.

"George," said April, "this is Lizzie. Lizzie, this is Furious George!"

I shook hands with Lizzie and we smiled at each other.

"George is on tour from New York," explained April, "and he's really cute!"

I blushed.

"Lizzie, tell George what we do to cute boys," said April.

"Fuck them?" was Lizzie's answer.

"That's right!" exclaimed April.

I looked at her. And at Lizzie. They looked to be about nineteen or twenty, and both very well built. April was wearing a short plaid skirt, and cute matching jacket. Lizzie was wearing a bowling shirt, pretty necklace, and wigger pants.

"Um," I managed to say before my tongue totally got hard, "how old are you guys?"

They both told me they were nineteen and that they loved to fuck. They loved to fuck guys. Together. To have threesomes. That Lizzie liked to sit on a guy's face and have her pussy licked, while April like to hop on pop, and go for a ride. I wished Evan, or Michael, or Todd or Rall, or even Stoots and Sean were around to hear this. Two girls, beautiful—telling me how they wanted me. I felt my women's stretch jeans begin to stretch a little more.

"No one is gonna believe thith," I said out loud. Tongue tied.

"We really want you," said April, with dead serious look in her eyes.

"You, um, both do thith a lot?" I said.

"Just with guys we want. The last guy we did it with came like four times."

I felt my prostate begin to hurt.

Suddenly some girl with dyed black hair and a dog collar comes walking up to us.

"Three girls and me," was what I was thinking.

"George," said the dog-collared girl, "can I have a word with you?"

"Sure," I said her.

"Alone," she said.

I looked at her. Cute. Just like Lizzie and April. This was my lucky night—If I wanted it.

I got up, told Lizzie and April I'd be right back, and took a walk up the street with the dog girl.

"How well do you know those girls?" asked Ms. Hartz Flea Collar.

"I met them tonight. They like speed. The both wanna fuck me," I said, and then was surprised at my own arrogance.

"Sorry," I mumbled.

"Don't be," she said. She then went on to tell me her name was Katie, and that she worked at the porno store next to the coffee house.

This town was getting better and better by the second.

Katie went on to tell me that besides selling porno, she loved the punk rock, and the punk rock boys. And that is why she was talking to me now.

"You want the sex," I said to her, copying Mike from Blanks 77.

"No," she said, "You do, that is why I feel I must warn you!"

I just looked at her. Dog collar. Black hair. Large breasts. Cute hip-hugging jeans. And she had said "No."

"Warn me about what?" I asked, a little annoyed at the rejection. I mean, I was cute, I had a leather jacket, women's stretch jeans, and what's more, a chicken in my pocket.

"I need to warn you about those girls, April and Lizzie," she explained.

"What about them?" I asked her, meanly. This girl didn't want me to have the choice of getting any action—jealous five-in-one-flea-collar chick.

"They asked you for sex, didn't they? They wanna have a *ménage à trois!*" she said.

I asked her to speak fucking English.

"They both wanna hump you, right?"

I told her she was correct.

"They are both fourteen years old, George," Katie said to me. Then just smiled.

"Fourteen," I mouthed, but couldn't say because I couldn't breathe.

"Not only that," she said, "just fourteen!"

I thanked Katie for telling me, and ran back to Lizzie and April.

"Wanna see my ID?" I asked them.

Evan was now sitting between them.

"Sure," said April, and took it. She saw how old I was.

"I love older men," she told me as she gave me back my driver's license.

Lizzie shook her head in agreement.

"Well, I said, you will have to look elsewhere!"

I grabbed Evan by the arm and yanked him away from the two black widow spiders who were trying to get us twenty years each in the state pen.

"George," yelled Evan, "they like us! Let's talk to them!"

"Fourteen, Evan," was my answer.

Evan and I walked silently to the van, and spent that evening in the Motel 6 not talking about it.

"Ha ha!" exclaimed Michael, sometime during the middle of the night, "You guys almost went to jail!"

We hit him with our pillows until he shut up.

***

We arrived at Jerry's Pizza the next day around four. Jerry's was in Bakersfield, and we were playing the basement of the place.

As we loaded out the van, I checked my chicken for about the hundredth time that day. It was well fed, well educated, and was much loved. Stupid thing.

"How's your chicken?" asked Todd as he carried the Marshall head past me and into the club.

I said nothing, but cursed the damn thing. It was bad enough I had OCD and had to check locks and faucets, but this was making me crazy. And My Future Ex-Wife would kill me if something happened to it.

Later that evening lots of kids showed up, and the promoter, Nate Dog, told us we'd definitely make our guarantee, and paid us up front. That was a first. And last.

We played our set in the basement of the place, which was actually quite huge. And hotter than hell. Or Florida.

As we dripped sweat onto the crowd, I felt myself beginning to faint a couple of times, and actually cut the set short. F.Y.P played a really great set, and even though the PA died somewhere in the middle of one of their songs, they rocked like hell. Or in hell. Whatever.

Later that night, after the show, Evan and I watched two girls fight, and then get forced to make up by Nate Dog, who told them that if they didn't behave, they could never come back. One of the girls later told me that she would have called the police, but if she was busted for fighting, she'd be a third time felon, and it was hard time. Then she asked if I had any speed. She was sixteen years old.

I love the kids.

***

"What kinda name is 'Hi-Tech'?" I asked Todd as we drove toward Fresno the next day with the boom box blasting.

"I think we are playing a disco," he explained to me, and then went back to listening to Nirvana's *In Utero*.

We arrived in town early, and got ourselves our Motel 6. Michael decided he needed to go for a swim, but then found out they hadn't cleaned the pool. It was real hot and we were all kind of cranky. Even my chicken, who began to act funny. It had started to beep that day at odd times. Even though it was well fed, educated, and loved. Something was wrong.

When we pulled into the parking lot of "Hi-Tech", I let out a low moan.

"What's wrong?" asked Evan.

I told him to read the sign.

It said, "Hi-Tech Video Arcade And Family Fun Center".

"All right," exclaimed Michael, "Video Games!"

And games it was. All over the fucking place. The walls were lined with them. As well as pinball games, skeetball, and ping pong. They also had a pizza counter, and little rides for tots. Punk rock.

We set up in the middle of the floor of the place and did our set. Lots of kids watched us, and lots played games. I'd have played the games too.

F.Y.P played and the kids slammed around. Some almost knocked over a couple of game machines, and eventually, the set was cut short.

Afterwards, we ate the pizza they had gotten for us earlier, and hung out with some of the kids.

Then, as we were loading out, we saw four nazi skinheads in the parking lot scaring everyone. One guy had the largest White Power tattoo I'd ever seen. Biggest Swastika tattoo too.

Evan went inside the club, scared, but I hung out, waiting for the lunkheads to attack the kids. Cause I had a plan.

About an hour earlier, I had ventured across the street to get some Gatorade, and this beautiful girl walked up to me.

"Hey baby," she said, "you're hot, you wanna date?"

I looked at her and didn't put two and two together. This was fucking Fresno, California, for Christ sakes. I didn't expect hookers.

"Um," I stammered, "errrrr."

"Fifty bucks," she said.

Then I realized what was going on.

"Twenty," I said, even though I didn't mean it. The New York haggling Jew had awakened in me.

"Thirty and I'll lick your ass," she said.

"Ewww," was my reply.

She just stared at me, and I walked over to the 7-11 type place and got my juice.

Once inside the place, I found myself surrounded by many hookers, and even more pimps. I got my juice, and got out as quick as possible. Only four girls called me Madonna.

As I stood next to the owner of Hi-Tech, he shook his head with worry.

"I hate those skinheads. They always destroy a good scene!" he said.

I looked at the guy. He was sorta old, but really cool. I told him I knew what he meant.

"I can't call the cops," he explained to me, "because they'll just come and arrest everyone. There is a ten o'clock curfew in this town, and the cops are almost as bad as the skinheads."

I felt bad for the guy.

"Listen," I said, "If those skinheads come over here, let's just go across the street and tell the pimps that they just beat up one of their whores. The skinheads will be Swiss cheese in no time."

The guy looked at me and nodded his head, "I like you," he said, "you either got huge balls, or you're insane!".

I told him it was both. We smiled to each other, and watched as cops showed up anyway and took away the baseball bats the skins were holding, and then chased them away.

Fresno is a lovely town. Remind me to get a gun next time I go there.

***

As we pulled into the parking lot of the Lazy-8 Motel in San Jose, my cell phone rang. At first I thought it was my chicken, and start to push all the buttons. But the ringing continued and I answered the phone.

"George?" asked the voice on the cell.

"Yeah?" I asked, "Who's this?"

"Luke!" was the answer.

"Luke?" I asked, somewhat confused that my chicken hadn't beeped at all that day.

"It's your brother, you putz," said Luke. Luke lives in Santa Cruz, near San Jose, which is where he works.

"Sorry Luke," I said, "it's just this damn chicken, it hasn't talked all day!"

"Chicken? Talked?" asked Luke, "George, have you started smoking pot again?"

I explained to my brother, for two dollars a minute, that my chicken was my virtual pet, and it wasn't beeping at all that day, and I was worried. I told him he was a computer-whiz, and maybe he could help. He told me he knew nothing about how to use computers, just how to make software. Whatever.

"So where are you?" he asked.

I told him the Lazy-8, next to McDonalds.

He said he was in his car now, and would be over in fifteen minutes.

An hour later he found us, and took us all and F.Y.P out to dinner. He rules.

We arrived at the Cactus Club an hour late. As we loaded in, the big owner/bouncer guy yelled at us, telling us that we shouldn't be tardy. Then he told us the sound guy wasn't there yet, and we'd have to wait for sound check.

As we stood outside the club, my chicken started beeping. I looked at it and pushed buttons, but it kept making noise. Finally, once again, I realized it was my cell phone. On it was my pal Aaron. He told me he'd be over in a little while, that he was packing up to go on the rest of the tour with us. I told him he was crazy but to be my guest.

"George," said my brother Luke, as I hung up the phone, "Guess who is coming to see you tonight?"

I told him Aaron was, as well as My Future Ex-Wife, and my ex, Natalie.

"Natalie is in town?" he asked.

I explained to him that she flew in from Florida to join us on the rest of the tour, and that she'd ride with Aaron and me and My Future Ex-Wife.

"Oh my God," he said.

"You're telling me," I said, "I'm gonna have both of them nagging at me, 'Stand up straight', 'Tuck in yer gut', and 'Don't eat so much.'"

And I was right.

After sound check, Luke again asked me if I knew who was coming to see me.

"Who?" I asked as we walked out of the club.

He didn't have to answer. I saw my cousin, Joanie Tabb, right before my eyes.

I've known Joanie since I was a baby. She used to baby-sit me when I was a toddler, and I really hadn't spent much time with her since. My family is fucked in that way.

"George!" she said, and hugged and kissed me.

I kissed my first cousin back.

"You look great! How's the road treating you?"

I told her it was okay, but my chicken was unhealthy and I was worried about it.

When she asked about the chicken, Luke told her he'd tell her later, and rolled his eyes.

Then came a huge shock.

"George," said Joanie, pinching my cheek, "do you know who this is standing next to me?"

I looked and saw Evan. In his Tupac Shakur shirt.

"That's Evan," I said.

"No," she exclaimed, "on my other side!"

I looked and saw this older lady with curly brown hair. She was wearing an older lady sweater, older lady pants, and older lady shoes. Also she smelled like an older lady, and had on older lady jewelry.

As I looked at her, I felt a lump begin to rise in my throat. I knew her. Not by sight. Not by smell. But by her warmth. Her smile. Although I hadn't seen her since I was four, I knew damn well who she was. It was my Aunt Marilyn. The woman who used to bounce me up and down on her lap and make me sandwiches. The woman who changed my diapers, and cradled me like her own while my mother was out. The woman who, after my Uncle Steve divorced her, was badmouthed by him to this day. The woman who had been so sweet to me as a child that I will forever feel her spirit pulsate through my veins.

"Hi Aunt Marilyn," I managed to eek out, holding back my tears.

"You remember me!" she exclaimed, "You remember me!

I told her that of course I did, and that it was great to see her. It was hard to talk.

"You've grown up to be a man," she said, "I haven't seen you since you were four!"

I told her I remember coming over to her house as a kid, and playing with her and her kids and my brothers.

"Your mother used to dress you and your younger brothers up in little blue shirts and shorts and saddle shoes. You were such cute babies."

I could see tears welling up in her eyes. And I'm sure she could see mine.

"Ha!" said some little punk kid, who was listening in on the whole conversation, "George Tabb wore saddle shoes and shorts!"

I hit the little mohawked fuck, and he ran away, holding his arm.

"Your hair," said Aunt Marilyn, "It's blonde! When did it turn that color? You had such beautiful curly brown hair."

I explained to her that I dyed my hair, and that it was actually light brown, with some, or lots of, gray.

As I talked to my Aunt longer, Todd and some of the guys started to stroll over, and I introduced everyone to my Aunt.

She asked them all lots of questions, and I watched Luke and Joanie smile. And I felt home. For those few brief moments.

"I can't believe how you've grown George," said my Aunt Marilyn as she then pinched my cheek, "It's been a long time, but what's new?"

Everyone got quiet.

I wanted to answer her right away as not to make her uncomfortable, so I blurted out the first thing that came into my head.

"I stopped wetting my pants!" I said.

Everyone laughed, and I felt like a dope. But then I saw the smile on Aunt

Marilyn's face, and knew I said the right thing.

***

That night we played a pretty silly set. Joanie and Aunt Marilyn left early because they couldn't stay late, but they gave me a dozen roses for good luck. During our song, "Roy Lichtenstein," Evan clobbered some kid with the mic stand cause the kid was being a putz, and after the set, when Evan tried to apologize, the kid told him it was "an honor to be hit by a member of Furious George." Also during our set, Aaron joined us on guitar, and was so good he got to play some more shows on the rest of the tour. F.Y.P did their usual stuff, and an exceptionally great version of their song "New York City" that night.

Back at the Lazy-8, after the show, My Future Ex-Wife asked me how my pet was doing. I explained to her that she had got me a damn chicken, not a dog, and the chicken was giving me ulcers. That it was not well today, and I was worried about it. When she asked to see it, I handed it to her.

"What does this cross and RIP next to it mean?" she asked.

I grabbed it and looked at it. My chicken had died. Dead. Kaput. Expired. It was an ex-chicken—and at only seven.

"It's dead," I said to My Future Ex-Wife in a low voice.

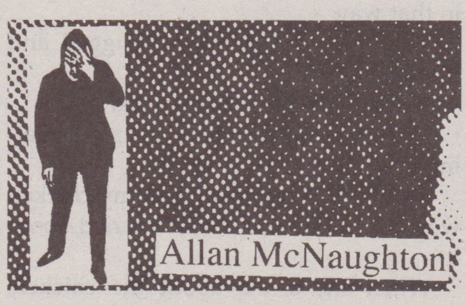
And instead of yelling at me, and telling me I couldn't take care of a pet if my life depended on it (and she'd be right), she just gave me a kiss on the cheek, and told me it was wonderful to see me.

But it was more wonderful to see her.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. A quick shout-out to Rall and the rest of the San Pedro crew as well as Mike Watt, for being so cool lately. I love you guys.
2. Cool bands you must check out on MySpace include: Rich White Males, who, if I don't mention them, have threatened to kill me. Just kidding. Also check out Potato Famine. Both bands are punk rock. The first band is silly punk and the second is Irish punk. Great stuff. Also check out Disco Assault, a damn fine band that even covers Roach Motel. Also, my pal, Bill Pop, has a new CD out. Check him out online, too. Bill's album, "My Lonely Mind", isn't exactly punk rock. It's just great song writing!
3. Obviously, *Grand Theft Auto IV* is da bomb. The shit. The shinizzle. Niko Bellic is more punk rock than that little twerp in that band that wears all that make-up and sounds like Social Distortion on meth. Actually, lots of bands sound like that these days. Pussies. Other cool titles I've been into include "Ninja Gaiden" for the Nintendo DS, which is awesome, and "Silent Hill" for the PSP. Creepy as all hell. Oh, "Haze" for the PS3 is poo poo. Sorry guys, I know you tried. If you have never played video games before, you might like it. It's a great idea, but it never follows through.
4. Just got that *Charlie Bartlett* movie on DVD. Wonderful, wonderful, wonderful. Oh, I also went out and purchased the first season of *Metalocalypse*. Fucking DethKlock are the best band, ever. Brutal!!!!
5. Actually, the fact that my favorite band these days is a cartoon band says something about me. Or the scene. Probably me, though.
6. myspace.com/georgetabb—gotta go choke the chicken!!!



Chaos In Tejas 2008

Sandy and I sat up until 4 a.m., out in the shed in the garden of his Austin home. We chinwagged long into the night to a soundtrack of *John Peel Session* tapes recorded many years ago on a cheap ghetto blaster in a Newmain's bedroom. The Prong *Peel Session* was the best thing they ever did, and that night it sounded like some kind of sonic bulletin from the distant days of the mid '80s. Yeah that's right, I said Prong. Blistering, is how I'd describe the guitar sound. We also jammed the HDQ *Peel Session*. HDQ were a funny band: starting off as spiky-topped Discharge noiseniks and turning into Sunderland's answer to Dag Nasty. It wasn't until Dickie Hammond twinned those Brian Baker guitar riffs with Frankie Stubbs' dreary, rain-and-gin soaked Coronation Street songwriting that melodic hardcore finally reached its true potential. Listening to that HDQ session in the shed was definitely a heavy nostalgia trip, but it was ultimately more satisfying than watching Dickie (in full Eric Bristow darts regalia) back onstage with Frankie and turning in a greatest hits set. Leatherface weren't bad at all, in fact both sets I saw at the Texas fest were solid, but it's not 1988 anymore—for us or for them. The nostalgia just felt empty. Memories; ghosts of passions first stirred in the bloom of youth.

The next evening we set out on bikes; a twenty-mile party on wheels through the hills above Austin with a messenger bag of beer. The circuit ended with a swim in the creek amongst ducks and turtles. Two little kids asked us to keep an eye on their fishing poles—bent safety pins tied to two tree branches, and a slice of Wonder Bread for bait. You should have seen the one that got away. Huck Finn was hiding in the bushes.

At sunset we dodged sightseers and rode past clouds of leathery bats as they began their blind riot charge into the warm Texas evening. Secret samosas were consumed before stopping at a bar called the Hole In The Wall. It's unlike the Hole In The Wall in San Francisco: different dicks hang out in this one. The bartender stood Sandy and I to free whisky beverages, which we enjoyed just before local alt-country act Lonesome Heroes took the stage. I can't stand the term "alt-country," but the band was really good. They call themselves psychedelic country, but I couldn't tell if any of them were actually tripping. In a town whose musical legacy includes the Thirteenth Floor Elevators and the Butthole Surfers, everyone has to be a little psychedelic, right?

We spilled onto the street after the show and went for more tasty samosas at the secret samosa spot. There wasn't anything that secret about them, they were right there in the counter display. I suppose it's the fact that you don't expect to be able buy a samosa in a donut shop at 2 a.m.

Maybe I should backtrack a bit, to the actual fest itself? Do you really want to hear about the bands and who played what? Roky Erickson was basically the same as the first time I saw him last year in San Francisco. It's still amazing to get to see him play those old songs. People were stoked that Billy Gibbons from ZZ Top joined him onstage for the last two numbers. I have to say, although I'm aware of ZZ Top having a respectable body of work prior to their '80s MTV video fame, I basically only know them from that era. Sorry, but that stuff is shit. All of it sounds like it was programmed by a sleazy, bourbon-drinking robot, which, when I actually type that, sounds like a recipe for the best music ever. Maybe they got the wrong software for the robot or something.

Anyway, I didn't mean to go on about ZZ Top. Let's move on to London's answer to ZZ Top, minus the beards, Hard Skin. Blistering set of classics on the Thursday night, straight off the bus after another short tour, bringing the sounds of fake Oi to spoiled Yanks. Best line from Fat Bob: "I liked Los Crudos when they were just Mexican, but I like them even more now that they're gay." The next day they played on a party boat out in some Texas lake to a 100 unhealthy, sunburned miscreants. It was like a recovery program for people with regrettable tattoos. Tall Dan from punk HQ (e.g., the MRR house) took a tumble on the kiddie chute, sliced his arm, and stirred up some chum for the freshwater sharks. Later that night he was all stitched up and putting on a brave face. After Hard Skin played on the barge, the coast guard had to come out and spirit Johnny Takeaway back to shore so he could jet back to jellied-eel land. Genius can't hang about getting a suntan. Criminal Damage just about managed to get through an impromptu set as a three-piece with the drummer throwing up into her mouth all the way through. As soon as they were done she heaved her ring over the side, only to hit some poor unsuspecting punk swimmers. Oops!

Back on dry land there was more punk nonsense to take in. I managed to miss a bunch of bands I'd wanted to see, but what can you do? There's too much to take in. At my advanced age I can't see ten bands a day anymore. Afternoon shows. After-parties. Inside shows. Outside shows. Bloody hell.

Once things calmed down a bit and most people had gone home, there was a wee gig at a pizza parlor with The Young and Social Circkle, who were both brilliant. It turned into a mini-fest of its own, with just about every band still left in Austin jumping on the bill. Crude and Fy Fan played two of the best sets of the fest, and even Los Crudos turned in a few songs. It ended up being one of the most fun parts of the weekend, because it was so much like a normal show.

That's when my real holiday started, and where we came in at the start of the column. Thanks to Timmy for organizing the fest, and to Sandy & Jen for putting me and the missus up for all that time.

Contact: PO Box 22971, Oakland, CA 94609, www.allanmcnaughton.com

My Mother
Wears
Combat Boots
Jessica Mills

The Mama Chaos in Tejas Diary

May 15, 2008

Emma-Joy woke this morning with the same tummy ache she went to bed with, soon followed by a full-on poop attack so I let her play hookie from school. She quickly felt better. Later, it became evident that she wanted to hang tight with me because in a few hours, I was leaving for a few days. No stress all day together with me, her and two-year-old Maya-Rae, but then Maya-Rae got the tummy bug, along with a hacking cough. All I wanted was my twin faucet-butt girls to feel back to 100% so that I could leave town guilt-free. We walked to the library and after some songs and stories with a few of their friends both girls were happy and seeming to feel fine. I swung by the bank on the way home to get some travel cash. (Read: beer money. But with not much of it available, I knew I'd have to set aside my dark beer taste and stick with the PBR and Sparks cans instead.) At home while Maya-Rae napped, I packed a bag before sitting down with Emma-Joy to watch the movie that she checked out at the library, *102 Dalmations*. After cooking dinner and washing dishes, I wrote out a list of notes for Ernesto to consult during my absence. You know, the family manager type of stuff, like what time the kid's birthday party is on Saturday. I was anxious to get going, but really, I cannot stand leaving my three lovelies. The fear I feel over being separated is real but I refuse to allow it to paralyze me.

I nearly puked on the plane, not because of any in-flight liquid libations, but because the 50-person capacity jet didn't handle its turbulence well while flying through five-mile-high clouds. I'm proud I wasn't one of the screamers. Most of my fellow passengers let loose a loud nervous laugh when the pilot eventually made an announcement that asked us to sit back, relax and enjoy the flight.

On the ground in Austin, I caught Bus 100 to downtown and thanks to Luggs from Milwaukee, who was coincidentally on Bus 100 with me, got dropped off within two blocks of Emo's, where Chaos in Tejas had already commenced. (The bus driver had intended to take us on a detour and luckily, Luggs had been paying attention cuz I most certainly hadn't been.)

Immediately, my friends Wicks and Ellie were outside to meet me. Hurrying in to the bar, I was overwhelmed with so many faces from tours past and began to wonder if this month's columns in *MRR* would read like a Chaos in Tejas report-back competition. But then my ol' girlfriend Laura appeared and she snapped me out of wondering mode and in to see the show.

Hard Skin had just started playing. Not a bad way at all to begin the weekend, even if I'd missed all the bands before them. Up front, bouncing around with my travel pack still on my back, I quickly felt my load lighten. My pack's zipper had exploded and I was on the ground gathering my duds and spare eyeglasses. Coming up with an armful of what I thought was everything, I was glad it was so dark in there. Seeing complete strangers holding up my bras and panties like they were asking where-in-the-hell-did-these-things-come-from, was a tad bit too much for me who hardly ever gets embarrassed.

I zipped my shit up and headed out. Team Collins arrived just as Roky Erickson, with special guest Billy Long Beard from ZZ Top, was saying goodnight. Go, Austin!

May 16, 2008

Robert the Hero woke us up with breakfast tacos, definitely helping soak up the leftovers from my excessive drinking in a short amount of time from the previous night. But still, the four hours of sleep my already sleep-deprived mama body had gotten proved painful.

With six of us lap-crunched in a tiny

car, we made it to The Boat on time, a two-story platform floater waiting to take 150 of us punxes out on Lake Travis for a Sex-Pistols-esque, 30-years later kinda-sorta reanactment. Only this time it was Hard Skin, Crude and Criminal Damage. Nothing but smiles for hours on the international float fest and lots of wow-it's-great-to-see-yous. And beer. Lots of beer. And Sparks, those tangy neon-orange pick-you-up-and-get-you-drunk-at-the-same-time malt beverages. And lots of sunburn. And swimming. And hairy, tattooed, man-boobed dudes sporting brightly colored skivvies. And a gold lamme tube top or two. And bikinis with bullet belts and sporty water sandals. And not a face left unsmiling. The. Whole. Time. One water slide casualty, a sliced-wide-open wrist, was rescued by a medic dinghy and taken back to shore to get six stitches. Coulda been worse. Like an accidental wrist-gasher suicide. And one way-to-hold-your-puke-in award goes to Crystal, Criminal Damage's drummer. With the very last note of their set, she spun around and let it fly from the boat's second story, over the railing and into the water. The ducks swimming around below thought it was a snack. Ewww, gross, you puke-gobbling duckies!

The long ride back from Lake Travis had me reeling, like a seasick afterthought. Reeling, drooling and begging for a nap, Karoline reminded me that life's too short for that sleep stuff. And she should know. The moving from Milwaukee back to San Francisco trip she had been on and was still on had her down-right, lacking-sleep wacky, too.

Food helped me. So did a beer and more bands. As did relieving my very sore milk-engorged boobs and the White Russians we mixed up with that extra mama milk and drank down quick. Nothing like a super healthy live enzyme alcohol whallop to kick up your second wind and keep you sailing straight through Iron Lung! (My night's highlight, fer sure!) Next up: Brain Handle, Marked Men, Straightjacket Nation, and Leatherface. I had to bail before Dillinger 4. And I chose sleep over my FOMS membership (fear of missing something) at the late show that did not even end up happening. For once, I chose wisely.

May 17, 2008

Rather stoked to wake up feeling 95% well rested, we whisked off to an avocado margarita brunch. (And tacos, but mostly margaritas.) Then, we were off to Monkeywrench Books on the North side of town where I was doing a book-reading event. I was glad I'd called it an early night the previous night and had spent an hour outlining what I was going to talk about. I never know if no one will show up or if it will be standing room only. But this was one of those standing-room-only times with a nice balance of parents and younger punk non-parents. More comfortable hiding behind my instrument among a stage of more interesting others, I always get a giddy anxiety attack when it's just me and my book heading up a talk/reading/discussion. But I enjoyed this one. Everyone there was super welcoming, interested and supportive. Props to all you unexpected strangers! And my heart skipped a bazillion beats when I ended and looked up to see an ol' sweetheart of mine sitting among the strangers. We hadn't seen each other in ten years.

Got to the show early enough to eat before we started drinking. Watched Deskonocidos before Dionne whisked me off with her hairdresser's scissors for a back alley, over a locked gate and up a fire escape haircut. She wanted to do it before she got too drunk but somehow, I still wound up with two miles of bangs. We missed the second band even though we were hurrying our trespassing selves along. But yeah, we were in time for Invasion! I saw a double-fisted Dionne heading outside again after Invasion, taking a swig off one of her beers, letting me know she was just on her way outside to puke. Next up: Inmates, Tragedy, Crude and Los Crudos! So totally-smooshed packed. Too much so that Laura and I planted ourselves in a slightly elevated spot in the back. Stuck there, we were able to see every bit of the goose-bump inducing Los Crudos. It had been a long, long time since the last time I saw them play in Gainesville. Duh, of course it had been a long time. This was a reunion show! And not wanting to cash in on the reunion money for personal gain, they were donating their share of the night's pay to a worthy youth-oriented organization whose name, I am sorry to say, I cannot remember now. It was so crowded, I didn't get to hang enough with some of my lost-in-the-giant-haystack-of-punks peeps, but go figure, right next to me was an old girlfriend of mine who I hadn't seen in 18 years.

After a few holy-shit-I-can't-believe-it's-yous, we headed off to the late show where I thought I was going to be lucky enough to see Limp Wrist, but after only four songs from Deskonocidos, it was all over. Some unruly punks thought it would be cool to shit in their own backyard. Oh, the pain of irony. Paying money to see a fest at a club that has security personnel kept the shitheads in check, but a free, total DIY show at a fellow punk's independent business (an auto shop) got them in the mood for unopened beer can missiles, fireworks and fisticuffs.

Back at the hotel, I impose myself on my old hometown No Idea friends, making them stay up way too late to talk to me so I wouldn't fall asleep before I had to catch my ride to the airport at 6:00 a.m. But with still an hour and a half to go and them fading fast, I let them off the hook.

May 18, 2008

The days blurred together as I did not sleep and caught my ride. Thanks to my night's two cans of Sparks delicious malt beverage, I didn't start feeling the sleepless burn until 6:30 a.m. At the airport, there were other Chaos festers toting their weekend's prized vinyl through the security check point and we exchanged knowing, smiling, oh-my-god-I-am-so-freaking-exhausted nods. At my flight's gate, I couldn't sleep. On the plane, I couldn't sleep. Only an hour and a half plane ride and back home at 11:00 a.m., I couldn't sleep; my two young daughters were all over me with bright smiles, sweet kisses and warm hugs. And I couldn't get up out of bed either. Not only exhausted, it seemed I'd caught the tummy ache poop attack that my girls had suffered the day I left. My sweetheart hero, though he'd already stepped up with a day off work and a full weekend of solo daddy, stepped up again and got the girls out of the house so I could sleep. And what a miracle three-hour nap it was. Though I still couldn't move out of bed without an alarming liquid ass sensation, I was able to hang with my girls with books, drawing and a movie.

No matter if I return home exhausted or sick, whenever I get back home after having been out of town for a few days or a week without my girls, I feel like there's been too great an imbalance between my daily-life mama reality and the decadence of child-free time. It's always such a stark contrast. But I also feel like I've been recharged, given just the break I needed when the mama-gig is getting to me, and like I am able to reassume my mama-gig with more patience and enthusiasm.

punkparents, get in touch!
yardwideyarns@hotmail.com

New York Times reporter Eric Lichtblau is a prime example of what ails us—reporters who trust the government.

When Lichtblau found out that the Bush Administration was listening to our phone calls and reading our email, he decided not to run the story. Instead of fulfilling his duty to the Times' readers, he asked the White House for permission. By the time the NSA domestic surveillance story ran, 14 months had passed—and Bush had won the 2004 election.

Now, in a May 17th piece bearing the headline "FBI Gets Mixed Review in Interrogation Report," Lichtblau is running interference for the government again. "A new Justice Department report praises the refusal of F.B.I. agents to take part in the military's abusive questioning of prisoners in Guantánamo Bay, Iraq and Afghanistan," begins the article, "but it also finds fault with the bureau's slow response to complaints about the tactics from its own agents."

"Abusive questioning." "Harsh interrogation tactics."

According to the Justice Department report, "routine" treatment of Guantánamo prisoners—witnessed by the FBI—includes "bending the detainee's thumbs back and grabbing his genitals." Military and CIA torturers chained detainees' hands and feet together for as long as a full day; "left to defecate on themselves." They terrorized them with dogs, stripped them and made them wear women's underwear and subjected them to blaring music, freezing cold and searing heat.

Torture. It's a simple word. Why not use it?

Lichtblau's "mixed review" appellation notwithstanding, the report by the Justice Department paints a shocking, uniformly negative portrait of a federal law enforcement agency whose officers react to appalling conduct with the Nuremberg defense—"I was just following orders."

"Indeed," reported US News & World Report, "time after time, the report concludes that FBI agents saw or heard about numerous interrogation methods—from sleep deprivation to duct-taping detainees' mouths to scaring them with dogs—that plainly violated their own agency's code of conduct." Rather than report their scruples to someone who might raise hell and put a stop to the systemic torture at Gitmo and other US concentration camps, FBI agents turned to the criminals. Just like Lichtblau did with domestic spying.

"When [one] agent mentioned [a torture] incident to the general [at Guantánamo], the general's response…was 'Thank you, gentlemen, but my boys know what they're doing.'" Ultimately the FBI, worried that agents could be charged with war crimes if they continued to witness the torture by CIA operatives and mercenaries, pulled its employees out of Gitmo and other camps. No one called a Congressman. None called a press conference.

FBI agents kept quiet—even when the CIA frat-boy-style torture tactics screwed up their interrogations.

In 2003, one FBI agent had "begin building a rapport" with Yussef Mohammed Mubarak al-Shihri, a Saudi citizen. Al-Shihri told the agent that female CIA agents had "forced to listen to the 'meow mix' jingle for cat food for hours and had a women's dress 'draped' on him." As usual, the agent turned to the torturer. "The agent said he confronted a female military intelligence interrogator who admitted to 'poaching' his detainee, but there was little more the agent could do. Following the incident, al-Shihri became uncooperative, and the agent said he never bothered to tell his superiors about the military interrogator's actions."

Turning a blind eye to torture. Watching passively as CIA goons destroy the trust of a possible material witness to terrorism. What "mixed review"?

As usual, the Newspaper of Record's worst sins in Gitmogate are those of omission—the really weird, truly horrifying stuff that could deprive the Administration of its few remaining supporters.

"Buried in a Department of Justice report," reported ABC News, "are new allegations about a 2002 arrangement between the United States and China, which allowed Chinese intelligence to visit Guantánamo and interrogate Chinese Uyghurs held there." Like their Tibetan neighbors, the Uyghurs of western China are victims of government oppression, including mass executions. Throughout the 1990s, US-funded Radio Free Asia urged Uyghurs to revolt against what they call the Chinese occupation. After 9/11, however, the US agreed to help China capture and torture Uyghur independence activists—as a quid pro quo for not using its UN veto to stop the American invasion of Afghanistan. (There's more about our betrayal of the Uyghurs in my book *Silk Road to Ruin*.)

"Uyghur detainees were kept awake for long periods, deprived of food and forced to endure cold for hours on end, just prior to questioning by Chinese interrogators," said ABC. "When Uyghur detainees refused to talk to Chinese interrogators in 2002, US military personnel put them in solitary confinement as punishment."

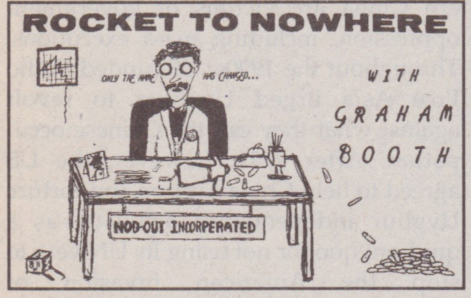
It's a tale bizarre enough to make Rush Limbaugh blush: intelligence agents from communist China invited to an American military base, where they're allowed to torture political dissidents in American custody, with the help of American soldiers. In light of China's crackdown on Tibet during the run-up to the Olympics, it's a tasty news tidbit. But it didn't run in The Times—or, as far as I can tell, anywhere else in the mainstream media.

At the same time journo-wimp Lichtblau was penning his "balanced" take on the Justice Department's bombshell report, the US government admitted that it has more than 500 children in its torture and concentration camps. More than 2,500 children have gone through US secret prisons since 2002, including at least eight at Guantánamo.

I know a lot of right-wing conservatives. We don't share much political common ground, but it's hard to imagine any of them thinking the indefinite detention and torture of children, against whom there is no evidence whatsoever of wrongdoing, is anything other than the behavior of a monster.

That's the US government, especially after 2001—criminal, corrupt and psychotic. But few Americans know the full extent of "their" government's misdeeds, because state-controlled media doesn't report them.

If a man screams in a government torture chamber, does he make a sound? Not if the only one who hears him is a reporter.



I am fucking stoked. It's rare that I will run across a punk record or tape that I've never heard of before. But it seems like it's been FOREVER since an unknown record/tape blows away all expectations. I just got a fuckin' rad Italian tape comp that I'd never heard of before called *ASSILLO POLITICO*. Being from 1982 it was a pretty safe bet, but there's no accounting for sound quality when you start delving into tape comp hell. As it turns out the sound quality here is quite good, and I was pummeled by otherwise unreleased tracks from 5° BRACCIO, INDIGESTI, DISPER-AZIONE, PEGGIO PUNX, HOLOCAUST, BABYLON'S WALL and ISOLATION.

I know some of these bands, and live INDIGESTI circa 1982 lives up to the hype. But I was most surprised by two bands I am relatively unfamiliar with. 5° BRACCIO has a track on the (Attack Punk) *Papi Queens Reichkanzlers & Presidennti* compilation 7", although I've never been lucky enough to score a copy in the wild. They also have a lot of tape comp appearances, including the legendary *RAW WAR* and *MUSIC ON FIRE* cassettes later on in 1983. But back in early '82 it was the very beginning for them, and they deliver some totally rough and unhinged street punk like only the Italians can do. I guess it makes sense, since that "Game of the Arseholes" dude said they're pre-NEGAZIONE, although NEGAZIONE never made that instant connection for me like 5° BRACCIO does.

The other total surprise was DISPER-AZIONE. Those guys were around well into the '80s, but didn't release their first EP until 1984. I didn't realize they started so early, but here is proof. This is the kind of hardcore I love hearing. Back in '82, bands were still defining the hardcore sound, so you get some really unique sounding stuff. DISPER-AZIONE obviously aren't the best musicians, and even if you aren't listening for it, you are bound to start picking out one mistake after another. But somehow the sum of its parts are greater than the whole.

These guys were on a mission to play super fast and furious hardcore punk, and they're not about to let their lack of abilities get in their way. So the drummer is playing as fast as he possibly can, nearly teetering off the rails at every turn. I'll be damned if he's not playing different beats during the same fast parts because his foot can't stay in time with his snare, and, oh yeah, there's cymbals too? These guys love a good breakdown, and whether it's the bass player showing off his lackluster skills, or a semi-decrepit drum fill, they all manage to hold things together just a bit longer. And the vocals? This singer sings as fast as the music is going in his head, which is to say, *a lot* faster than the music being played. It seems like every verse he'll finish his words and the band will still have two bars to go before he can start singing the chorus. This reads like it should be god awful racket, but somehow I love it and I wish more bands could let go of their inhibitions and just fucking go for it!

So in the continuing saga of reunions and rehashes, I attended a TARGET VIDEO screening at the Museum of Contemporary Art here in Los Angeles this past weekend. If you're not familiar with TARGET VIDEO, they were San Francisco based art punks who were one of the few contingents already busy documenting punk shows and events as early as 1977. I am familiar with TARGET VIDEO because their footage is both legendary and legendarily out of print. I have seen bits and pieces over the years, but I imagine there are loads of unseen tapes collecting dust in a warehouse somewhere. Thankfully the folks at TARGET are slowly making things available again in DVD format. This event, along with a second screening later on this June in San Francisco, suggest that this is just the beginning. On to the show...

We arrived downtown just as it was getting dark, and we could see a large crowd skulking about in the plaza outside the museum. Oh no, a line! I'd heard that Henry Rollins was guest DJ-ing the festivities, so I was dreading a mob scene. As we got closer we could barely make out a decidedly small film screen in the middle of the plaza. What had seemed like a line had actually just been people staking out a space in the growing crowd. Luckily our friend was a museum member, so we skipped out on the ten-dollar entrance fee and quickly joined the masses.

There was a huge line-up for drinks and popcorn, and people had come prepared, decked out with blankets, lawn chairs and beanbags on the sprawling artificial astro-turf lawn. Rollins was busy playing LA/beach punk classics, though I gotta say I was expecting less obvious standards and more of the weird picks I see him shelling out for on eBay (DESPERATE BICYCLES?!) and playing on his weekly radio show. We had about an hour to kill before the films started, so we checked out the museum and tried waiting in line for a beer. That ate up a good 40 minutes, except for the fact that they'd already ran out of beer by 8:30, and we had our pick of eight dollar wine or twelve dollar champagne. We opted to go dry and found one of the few spots left on the crowded lawn.

Finally the video started, and I felt like I was one of the few to appreciate their first pick, THE SCREAMERS "The Beat Goes On," legendary footage from 1978! Did I mention how small the screen was? Ah well, it was rad despite the lack of a big screen and I was sad to see Tomata go! Somehow they followed THE SCREAMERS up with the GUN CLUB. About ten seconds into it, I wished I'd never seen GUN CLUB live. I like their records well enough, but seeing Jeffrey Lee Pierce was a lot to swallow. Next up were another obvious pick; DEAD KENNEDYS "California Uber Alles," and then a ridiculous live in studio take of "Holiday in Cambodia." Jello was quite the showman. God I must have seen all of these before. I was praying for some CRAMPS at *Napa State Mental Hospital.* I consider that and THE SCREAMERS video to be the pinnacle of the TARGET VIDEO catalog. Well, I got my CRAMPS, but it was some later live footage, less Brian Gregory. Still, at least I got to see Lux Interior bleed for a good

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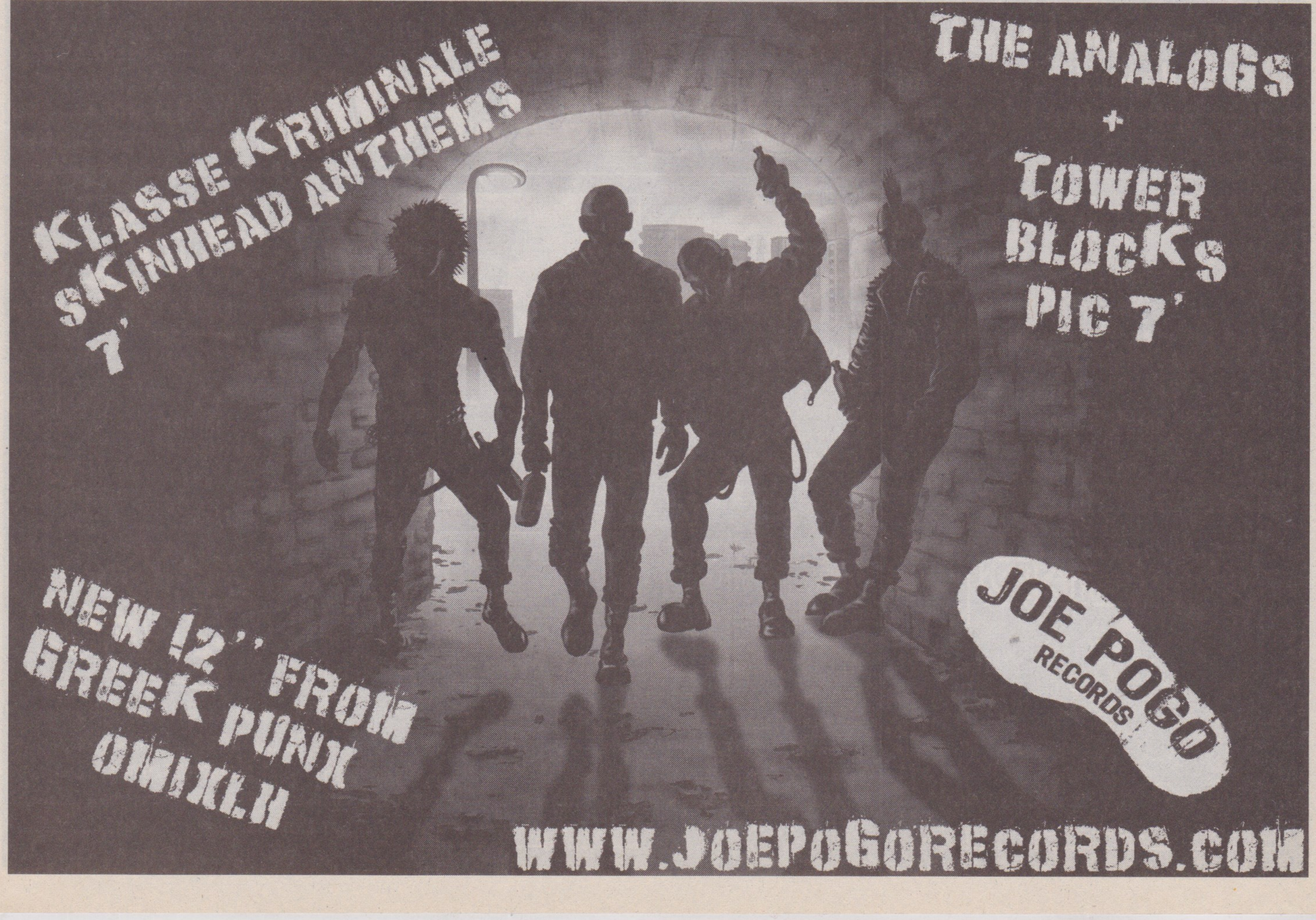

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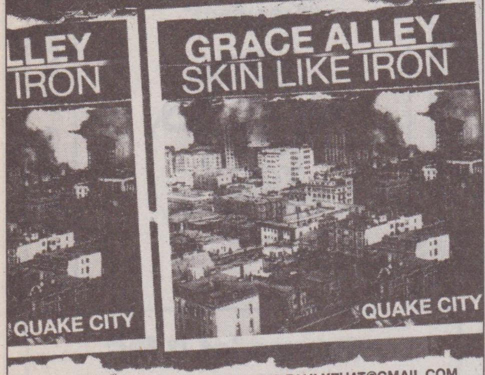

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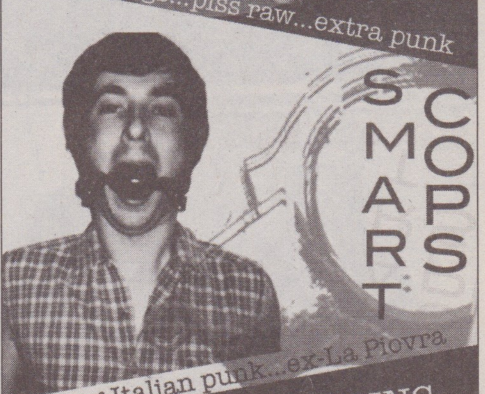

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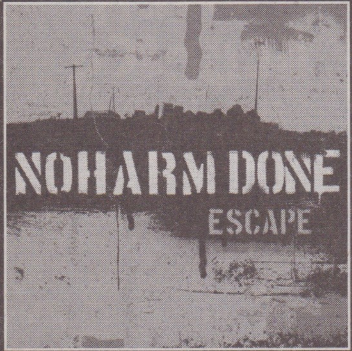

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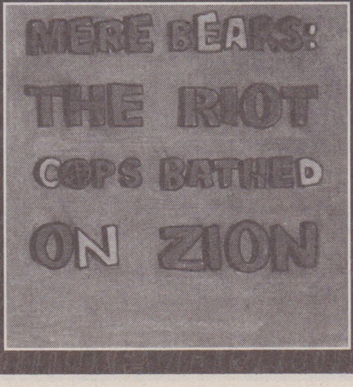

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three minutes. Ewwwwwww.

From there the sequencing gets kinda blurry in my mind. I remember being totally disgusted that the biggest crowd cheer of the night came at the start of the BAUHAUS video. Los Angeles was basically the center of the goth/deathrock universe throughout the '80s, and sadly most of the people in attendance remember PETER MURPHY, meanwhile clearly forgetting all about THE DAMNED or THROBBING GRISTLE (neither of whom made it into the night's compilation, BOO HOO). I'll listen to BAUHAUS, but they're hardly the most important band of the '80s like some people seem to think. Whatevs.

SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES was in there playing a song from her first album. I like that album, but I didn't really enjoy watching her sing a song from it. All I could make out was her gigantic hair fro, and her guitarist's equally poofy hair. *Boring*! Then there was some IGGY reunion stuff; he was wearing some hilarious biker stuff doing "TV Eye" with some randomly assembled band members—another one I could have done without. I definitely prefer the early '70s STOOGES footage I've seen over the years.

Another clip that got the crowd riled up came from the BAD BRAINS, probably from '83 or '84. Unfortunately the sound was bad, the camera angles made it difficult to see, and the song that I couldn't identify was about a minute long. There was some Dez-singing-era BLACK FLAG. I know hardcore purists always say Dez was the best singer, but seeing him singing just reinforced how much more I like Chavo and Keith Morris. To each his own! Seeing CIRCLE JERKS doing "Wasted" whetted my appetite for the latter. I gotta say, looking at them, I'm always amazed at how fast and tight they played, not bad for a band of dopey beach punks.

Whenever I think of TARGET VIDEO, I think of THE AVENGERS, and they squeezed in two songs from different shows. Not my favorite songs or the best footage, but fun to watch anyway. But my favorite clip of the night was from DEVO. For a band from Akron, Ohio, they really had it all. Their schtick, combined with the major label budget and set, made for one of the most memorable stage shows of all time. I know there is tons of DEVO live footage out there—I could watch them transfixed for hours and hours and never get bored. They must be seen to be believed.

Another highlight was getting to see THE DILS. It looked like they were playing at an outdoor carnival or something, and they blew through their anthem "Class War." I never realized how tall the Kinman brothers were! Totally rad! And WEIRDOS doing "Neutron Bomb"!!! And FLIPPER "Love Canal"!! I'm probably forgetting someone, but the only other bands I remember were X, which was OK, mostly because I like watching BILLY ZOOM have the same expression on his face throughout the entire thing, and some Rollins era BLACK FLAG from their first tour. Oh yeah, and a NEGATIVE TREND video for "Mercenaries," although that was just war footage spliced together over the song. It seems the TARGET crew were big fans of war footage and Soldiers of Fortune style gun worship. Weirdos indeed! Now they just need to re-release the CRIME *Live at San Quentin* video!

So if you haven't already done so, you absolutely *need* to check out some old TARGET videos. I don't know if anything is on YouTube.com, but I know the CRAMPS at *Napa State Mental Hospital* video is available on NetFlix, presumably so are THE SCREAMERS and FLIPPER. I'm not sure what else has been reissued at this point; unfortunately the TARGET VIDEO blog site leaves a lot to the imagination. Get to it!

CLIMATE OF FEAR

"It's called pho-pho-pho-pho-phobia, phobia in the atmosphere/pho-pho-pho-pho-phobia, phobia in a climate of fear."

Those words come from an old song by the Lewd, called, "Climate Of Fear." There's a good amount of pessimism expressed, concluding that, *"insecurity's a way of life."* Honestly, I don't always have a pessimistic point of view. I *like* my life, for the most part. Sure, my gut isn't disappearing as quickly as I'd like, even after exercising every day. 'Ya think the constant snacking after dinner might have something to do with it? Naaaah… that can't be it. But I understand what Lewd vocalist J. Sats Beret is getting at. There are plenty of things to be concerned about. Economic insecurity is certainly at the forefront of people's thoughts, these days. I covered that in my column about the recession a couple of months ago, except there's been a bit of a change—gas is now four dollars a gallon instead of three dollars. I'm planning a road trip to NYC this weekend, and figure I'm going to use about eighteen to twenty gallons to get there and back, plus the tolls. I'll probably end up spending around 100 dollars just for that, and that's in a relatively fuel-efficient Toyota. As I said in the other column, I can only imagine what it costs for bands touring in vans that get lower gas mileage.

The part about phobia and a climate of fear also maintains relevance. If anything, it's been magnified in recent years. Ever since the events of 9/11, there's been an attempt to plant fear and insecurities in people's minds, especially when it comes to people who weren't born here, have darker skin, or may practice a different form of religion. That still applies to people of a non-heterosexual persuasion, as well, although some small, incremental changes have been made in that department.

The fear-mongering is largely the product of the right-wing media establishment. That's nothing new and it's been covered many times in this space. When the airwaves are polluted by the likes of Ann Coulter, Lou Dobbs, Michael Savage and the like (a long list), it plants the seeds of insecurity, at least in some quarters. And woe to people who question this "climate of fear."

Hyperpatriotism. It's still with us, no matter where you look. Ellen and I were driving through Swampscott (the town where I grew up) the other night, and, over by the monument honoring the war dead, there was a gigantic flag flying overhead. I'm not good at measuring the size, but it wouldn't surprise me if it were more than twenty feet across. Who knows—it was almost intimidating to look at. It was the week after Memorial Day, so that might have been part of it. Then there's the whole thing about Barack Obama not wearing a flag lapel pin, which has emerged as a mandatory fashion accoutrement in this post-9/11 universe. The announcers on football games even sport 'em. One of the cashiers at the local Market Basket grocery store wears several of them on her apron. I almost wonder if the mass of them will weigh her down, leaving her with a permanent curvature of the spine.

In another attempt to question his patriotism, a photo was widely circulated of Obama standing at attention during the playing of the national anthem, without his hand over his heart. The alarmist email that accompanied this photo made reference to the fact that his middle name is Hussein, to stir up more Islamophobia. With Obama now the presumptive nominee, you ain't seen nothing yet with the mudslinging. There will be an endless barrage coming from the conservative media machine to paint him as an illegal-immigrant-supporting, unpatriotic terrorist-coddling Muslim. I think that covers most of it.

Say what you will about Obama (I still like him better than McCain, and he won't try to stack the Supreme Court with more radical extremists), but I like his response on the flag pin issue: *"You know, the truth is that right after 9/11, I had a pin… Shortly after 9/11, particularly because as we're talking about the Iraq War, that became a substitute for I think true patriotism, which is speaking out on issues that are of importance to our national security, I decided I won't wear that pin on my chest… Instead, I'm going to try to tell the American people what I believe will make this country great, and hopefully that will be a testimony to my patriotism."* Speaking as someone who completely loathes patriotism and nationalism of any kind, I still think that's a pretty damned good statement.

I also laughed out loud when reading a recent "Prickly City" comic strip. "Prickly City" is actually a conservative strip, and the two main protagonists are a conservative eight-year-old Latino girl named Carmen, and her best friend, a liberal coyote named Winslow. In fact, Winslow's running for president, and chose Carmen as his running mate (work with me here). Even though there's a right-wing slant to "Prickly City," it's actually funny on occasion, and has something of a libertarian streak. For instance, some strips have taken issue with torture and the erosion of civil liberties. This is much better than the never-funny right-wing strip "Mallard Fillmore," which relies more on crude caricatures and mean-spirited attempts at humor that always fall flat. When Winslow is questioned about why he doesn't wear a flag lapel pin, he says he can't, and the questioner responds by saying, "So you hate America." Winslow's retort? "I DON'T HAVE LAPELS!" I don't know—I thought it was funny. Even on the right, perhaps some folks realize how silly mandatory flag pins are.

Just to prove that we've reached a next level in fringe-dwelling phobia, how about the fact that Rachael Ray may be a supporter of terrorists? For the half dozen of you have no idea who I'm talking about, Ray is a perky host on the Food Network who has turned this perkiness into an impressive empire of TV programs, in addition to a daily chat show, books and cooking products (only 125 dollars for a knife set!); and she's also parlayed her fame into appearing in Dunkin' Donuts commercials. I think the correct word to describe her would be *ubiquitous*—she's an industry unto herself.

A recent Dunkin' Donuts ad that appeared on their website showed Ray wearing a scarf that looked like a kiffiyeh, which is a traditional headdress worn by Arab men. This created a furor on the right-wing *blogosphere*. Islam has become the new boogeyman, much like Communism was in the '50s. Instead of Commies under the bed, some find Muslims, and they're *all* terrorists, right? The origin of this idiocy with the ad was apparently a right-wing website called "Little Green Footballs," which has a real problem with Muslims. The story was picked up by conservative pundit Michelle Malkin. This "outrage" over Ray's scarf led to calls for a boycott of Dunkin' Donuts. Dunks ended up pulling the ad, lest they be perceived as supporting terr'ism— even though it was a scarf and not a keffiyeh. MSNBC quoted a statement from Dunks that read, *"The scarf was selected by a stylist for the advertising shoot. Absolutely no symbolism was intended."* It also said the ad was pulled *"because the possibility of misperception detracted from its original intention to promote our iced coffee."* Michelle Malkin said in her nationally syndicated column that the scarf resembled a keffiyeh; Middle Eastern garb that is *"popularized by Yasser Arafat and a regular adornment of Muslim terrorists appearing in beheading and hostage-taking videos."*

Michelle Malkin is a venomous hatemonger. In fact, some of her work appears on a sketchy, racist site called "VDARE", which also features work by white supremacists (ironic, since Malkin is of Filipino descent). And, of course, she's a Fox "News" regular. She wrote a book supporting the internment of the Japanese during WWII. She expresses particular venom for Muslims and undocumented immigrants—she even set up a site called "Deport Them Now." Speaking of wars and military service, like many right-wing supporters of the war in Iraq, she never served in the military, i.e. she's a "chicken hawk."

Actually, Dunks has done other things to protect its reputation, like suing to terminate franchise agreements with two stores in New Jersey last year. The reason? They allegedly hired undocumented immigrants, and asked, according to the *New Jersey Star-Ledger*, a judge *"to terminate the franchise agreement it has with two stores in Central Jersey, saying the owners knowingly accepted false documents, used false Social Security numbers and paid employees in cash. The company has filed similar lawsuits seeking to sever ties with franchises in Boston, Atlanta and Florida, where it is has accused three franchises of hiring illegal immigrants… the lawsuits come a year after Dunkin' Donuts became the most well-known corporation to enroll in Basic Pilot, a voluntary US Department of Homeland Security program that allows employers to perform electronic document checks to verify that applicants are eligible to work…"* Hmm… In this climate of fear, or more accurately, persecution of undocumented immigrants, it's obvious that Dunks is worried about being perceived as harboring "illegal aliens."

It's all about PR, and about protecting the bottom line, as Dunks continues its expansion, hoping to reach more of "middle America." It's a shame they let a group of extremists bully them into dropping the ad. It also presents a personal dilemma. I feel funny about supporting a company that engages in these tactics, but I also love their iced coffee. There's been a backlash towards Dunks' capitulation, with some recommending a boycott of the chain due to their caving in to the right-wing pressure. What's a caffeine addict to do?

DRINKING COFFEE, LISTENING TO MUSIC...

It's true—I've been drinking iced coffee (mostly home-made, though) while writing some of these reviews. First up is a live CD by the PAGANS, *The Blue Album* (Smog Veil, 1658 N. Milwaukee Ave., #284, Chicago, IL 60647, www.smogveil.com). as well as Pagans' vocalist Mike Hudson's autobiography, *Diary of a Punk: Life and Death In The Pagans* (Tuscarora Books, PO Box 987, Falls Station, Niagara Falls, NY 14303, tuscarora@sysr.com).

I first got into the Pagans in 1984, when a guy who had just moved here from Ohio asked if I'd ever heard of the band and when I answered in the negative, he schooled me fast. They were a scorching late '70s Cleveland punk band. He had an extra copy of their classic *What's This Shit Called Love/Street Where Nobody Lives* 7", and we worked out some sort of trade. I've been a diehard fan ever since. That single—above everything the Pagans ever did—is their calling, and the hearty "1-2-3-4" leading into the hornets nest of guitar buzz that starts "Shit" is one of those transcendent musical moments that stays with you for eternity. This was a rough-sounding band, but buried in there were '60s rock 'n' roll/garage/protopunk touch-points, and their covers included the Who, Stones, and Velvets.

As for *The Blue Album,* it was recorded in Madison, WI in 1988, during one of the band's brief revival periods. Sound quality is OK—not pristine, but not bootleg quality either. Only nine songs, and not hitting the twenty minute mark, which seems kind of odd, unless that was the whole set (my copy does have "Multiple Personalities" as a bonus track found on the "extras" section). Some of the band's better-known songs aren't here, but they do include hard-hitters such as "She's A Cadaver (And I've Gotta Have Her)" and "Real World" and slam through the Who's "Can't Explain" with a fiery recklessness. But this really falls into the "fans only" category, and the best introduction for the novice is the one of their anthologies. This is the soundtrack to have on while reading through Hudson's tome.

Hudson's book is unflinchingly honest. He's up front with his sentiments, and calls out those who wronged him, people who ripped him off—like their manager Johnny Dromette, and Mark Trehus from Treehouse Records, who released several Pagans records for which the band received little if any compensation. He also has no respect for the Cleveland rock 'n' roll "establishment," i.e. the press and radio, who never paid any attention to the Pagans when they were around. He particularly has it in for the big FM rock station WMMS. He writes about their buzzard logo and opines, *"I always thought that the station's choice of a leering buzzard as its logo was unwittingly appropriate. It was the most honest thing to use that, a carrion bird picking over the rotting carcass of our mortally wounded but not quite dead metropolis."* He laments the death of the old Cleveland, writing about the gentrification of the Flats area that birthed the local scene. That story could be told about any large city.

Hudson's intelligence and talent as a writer are obvious, and it makes sense, considering he's had a career as a newspaper reporter as well as a punk musician. With this autobio, you get a feel for what it was like then, warts and all—drugs, rip-offs, miserable touring experiences, homelessness, interpersonal squabbles and, sadly, the death of his brother, son and close friends. Somehow, Hudson has survived, even with his liver ravaged from years of severe alcohol abuse, and he's not sure how much longer he'll last. This is all standard rock-bio jazz/boilerplate and well-worn ground, but Hudson doesn't try to romanticize it in any way. He writes that his aspiration was to be *"Mick Jagger and Jack Kerouac rolled into one."* The thing is, for all his bad-boy imagery, Jagger was a product of the art school universe, whereas Hudson was a 10th grade dropout who carved out a journalism career in addition to a thorny, no-BS musical legacy.

Next up are the latest batch of releases from Grave Mistake Records (PO Box 12482, Richmond, VA 23241, www.gravemistakerecords.com). After a few years, there's finally a new DEEP SLEEP 7" EP, *Manic Euphoria*. There's a nerviness, an edginess to Deep Sleep's music, and it hardly fits into a standard punk definition, although that's the motor that drives things. Busy guitar and bass interplay, particularly for "Textbook Timebomb," but the nimble musicianship doesn't detract from the overall punch. Four of the songs here clock in at under a minute, and "Nothing Left" and "Not Coming Back" throw some thrash into the mix—something of a throwback to their first EP, which had a slightly rougher approach.

NIGHTSTICK JUSTICE are very quickly becoming one of my favorite bands, and their new *Claustrophobic EP* will rip you a new one. NSJ are fucking *relentless*, each song bridged by a whine of feedback. There's a tinge of the over-the-top Cleveland hardcore burn in their sound. Guitars on stun, bass on bulldoze and goddamn does Jeff Corso sound pissed off. Hardly taking a break with the speed until the stomping conclusion of "Hypocrite," an epic at over 3 minutes. They've also got a new 12" EP, that's a split release between Even Worse and Way Back When (and there will be a US pressing on Tankcrimes), but my copy showed up warped, and another one is on the way. I did listen to the part that was playable and it's just as blazing—and I'll have a more thorough review when I have a non-warped copy in my mitts.

A two song 7" by CLOAK/DAGGER features one song from their '07 album (released on Jade Tree) and an unreleased b-side (as these things were called back in the day when we'd call these records 45's) "Kamikazes" has the Wipers/Hot Snakes guitar tandem and a good amount of rhythmic bash. The flip is a cover of the Modern Lovers' "She Cracked"—a harder-edged take than the original, with jittery guitar replacing the keyboards on the original. Not bad but not essential.

Moving on, for those of you who can't get enough of the fast, thrashy hardcore, there's quite a bit to recommend this month: BLACK SS' *Terror Of The North East* (2004-2007) (Reaper, PO Box 2935, Liverpool, NY 13089, www.reaperhardcore.com) collects everything the band have done until now on one CD—demos, 7"s, splits, comp tracks and a live radio set—a lot to digest. Things haven't changed much—they've always stuck to a no-nonsense, aggressive style of hardcore, complete with Chuck Hickey's inner Choke forcefully expressed. But you can hear an evolution in playing ability, and the production values improve as the disc progresses. Speaking of no-nonsense, that's the gist of the lyrics. First off, although this is a straight-edge band, they stay away from the mosh/tough-core elements that have come to represent modern sXe music (thankfully), but there's no compromise when discussing drugs or alcohol. The sentiments are pointed, whether dealing with abuse of those substances, "the state of the nation," to quote "I Want Out" and, to use an ancient song by some DC band, being out of step with the world.

As long as I just mention DC, one of the better bands to emerge from that city in recent years was the now broken-up 86 MENTALITY. Deranged Records (2700 Lower Road Roberts Creek, BC V0N 2W4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com) have released a CD version of their *Final Exit* EP, tacking on a cover of Blitz's "4Q," one other un-credited bonus song (not sure if it's an original or a cover) and a 2005 live set from Belgium. Tough 'n bruising hardcore with a decidedly Oi!-ish inflection—adjectives I've used in previous reviews, but just in case you missed it the first time, it's worth reiterating. Paying tribute to the roots and capturing the bare-knuckled vibe, although they have a much more pronounced street punk edge than other retro-leaning hardcore bands. The live songs are taken from their first two EP's, plus a version of the Varukers' "Soldier Boy." Not a bad addition, although I'm thinking a few live video tracks might have been a good way to convey this band's no-bullshit presence.

Cleveland crazies THE INMATES return with their first new material in awhile, a 7" EP entitled *Now We Talkin Hardcore* (Kangaroo/Even Worse, www. geocities. com/tysonkangaroo or www. geocities. com/evenworserecords). Paul E. Wog is back with his phony English accent, and the Inmates are back with their completely shredding version of hardcore. Now we *definitely* talkin hardcore, and that comes from the intro to the whole shebang that pokes fun at the two label proprietors who co-released this slab. Raw, fast swill with buzzbomb guitar, wrecking ball drumming (courtesy of the one and only Wedge) and a whole lot of bad attitude. This time out, there's slightly cleaner production than in the past, but that doesn't mean they've gone high-tech or anything—nor gotten any nicer. The first lyrical line heard is, *"Do the world a favor, kill yourself today."* This is the real hardcore punk rock shit, accept no fucking substitute.

SPLITTING HEADACHE's new 7" missive, *The World's My Aim* (Chainsaw Safety, PO Box 260318, Bellerose, NY 11426, www.chainsawsafetyrecords.com) shows the band dishing out energetic hardcore punk with some sputteringly inspired lead riffs. If offering a comparison with Tear It Up (some of these folks' previous band) is allowed, this is a more refined approach, not going for the double-speed thing that TIU sometimes relied on. This is a more reasonably paced speed attack infused with strong, but not leaden, breakdowns. The life of pain and disillusionment continues for Mr. Dave Ackerman, at least from a lyrical standpoint. He says, "ten years later and nothing's changed." The intent, though, is a critique of someone else pissing their life away. Whatever demons are being fought off, I suppose this kind of outlet keeps 'ya at least *partially* sane.

One Percent Records (PO Box 141048, Minneapolis, MN 55414, www.onepercentrecords.com) have two new releases out from PANADAMONIUM. Well, one's a split with TOTAL FURY. Despite some occasionally leaden-sounding drumming and out-of-sync vocals, the five ladies in Pandamonium play with a winning old-school hardcore spirit. Jimena's yelping cadence reminds me of Mish from Sado Nation, and the songs on both their own EP and the split with Total Fury rip without any let-up in the speed department. Total Fury begin their side with a cover of Second Wind's "Bitch"—kind of ironic since that song is a rather nasty put-down of a relationship gone awry, and they're sharing the record with an all-female band. But I'm reading into it too much. It'd be tough to top Total Fury's first 12," but this is better than their last couple of releases. Hard/fast early '80s inspired hardcore given a good throttling.

Going overseas, there's a split LP from SOLID DECLINE and RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA (Thought Crime, Thomas Franke, Muskauer Str. 19, 10997 Berlin, GERMANY, www. thought crime records.de). These two European bands (SD are from Germany, RI from Austria) both tear through their brief songs with unfettered aggression. Solid Decline's members all used to be in the band Y, and after a few EPs (including a double), this is their first 12" release (same for RI). Whereas Y operated mainly in the grind realm, this band has staked out slightly different territory. Kick-ass hardcore punk, but with other twists and wrinkles. It's a wild ride executed with super-tightness, and including everything from thrash to west coast punk. There's one song that starts with almost a country-ish shitkick intro before turning on the speedjets. Ruidosa Inmundicia don't allow any breaks between the songs either. Caro howls at the top of her lungs, accompanied by the musical flail. After a demo and 7" (also on Thought Crime), they've perfected their fast hardcore approach. The packaging is top-notch, as well—a screen printed/heavy-stock cover presenting an image of tranquil tropical beach scene underneath a black and white image of fighter planes and a bombed-out building.

Moving over to Finland, URBAN UNREST have a pretty impressive self-titled EP (Evil Corporation/United Shoebrothers, www.myspace.com/evilcorporationrecords). If you're going to have a name that not only could be perceived as generic, and have a band logo that's not far from a certain early '80s NY hardcore band who also had the name Urban in their name (Waste, for the uninitiated), you'd better be pretty kick-ass—and that's accomplished here. The sound definitely conjures up that early '80s period, with undistorted guitar dishing out the flail and sticking to a walloping, loud/fast blueprint.

Finally, for something a little less hectic, there's *Killing Season*, a four song EP by PEDESTRIANS (Residue, residuerecords@gmail.com). No major change from previous releases—mid-tempo, tuneful but darkly-hued punk, although "Salvation" picks up the pace a bit. As straightforward as the rhythms are, the guitar lines have a good blend of sting and warm melody. Vocals that convey outrage without being obvious in a lyrical sense—if there's any sort of theme, it's about the senseless loss of life, be it in the inner city or overseas, and that indication also comes from the title. The obligatory caveat—if you liked 'em before, you'll like this, and if not, get on the bandwagon.

Al Quint, PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903,
email: suburbanvoice@earthlink.net,
Sonic Overload radio: http://sonicoverload.moocowrecords.com

R.I.P. Matt Frado (1981-2008)

don't try

by dave

Currently I am stuck on a flight from Chicago to Seattle. Listening to "Grief," by Thobbing Gristle. Chicago was just the connecting airport. I flew out from Pittsburgh on a plane that held about 50 people. I was reading Drew Daniels' treatise on Gristle's *20 Jazz Funk Greats.* The plane was getting knocked around enough to make a few drops of piss leak into my shorts. Now I'm waiting on drink service so I can get my whiskey on.

I spent the last two weeks traveling to various Midwest and Eastern destinations. The first week was spent visiting various friends and family. The second week was spent hanging out with, driving, and guiding Japan's Coffins at the tail end of their first US shows. I connected with Coffins and The Endless Blockade in Pittsburgh, where they were playing their last show together after a week of shows in Boston, NYC, Philly, Richmond and Allentown. We met up at the house of Missy, who helps run Pittsburgh's Mr. Roboto Project—the location of that night's show.

The Blockade dudes were tired out, but Coffins wanted to go out and maximize their time in the US. I took 'em record shopping at Brave New World (maybe it's not called that anymore?), got 'em some food and then we met back at the house to caravan to the show.

Slices opened the show to an eager and enthusiastic audience packed into the small space, with the incomparable Mantooth on vokills—solid fucking set by those natives. Following slices were the mighty and highly anticipated Hellnation—insane 1000 MPH devastation and anger served cold and raw. Hellnation are a band not to be fucked with, and yet are completely humble and likeable guys who kindly drove Coffins' gear to Maryland (due to lack of space in my van), where both bands were to play next.

The Endless Blockade played next, and by this time were a finely tuned machine. Nobody these days does powerviolence (sorry, neo-powerviolence) quite so well, except maybe Iron Lung, who are a different beast altogether. They mixed in a sickly dose of noise, and blazed through their set of mostly newer songs in the span of maybe fifteen minutes. Coffins' roadie Ryo joined them on vocals during the set-closing wall of noise-barrage.

Coffins were set to close the show, and for me this was special, having worked with the band for about two years now yet only meeting them in person and seeing them live for the first time that day. They do not disappoint—recreating their skullkrushing guitar sound through songs from the first two albums and demo, including, "Sacrifice To Evil Spirit", "Slaughter Of Gods" and "Blood and Bone." A newer track, "Mortification To Ruin" manages to be even more pummeling live. The crowd of mostly punks and a few metals seemed equally enthusiastic. I for one had a big smile throughout, as one does seeing a favorite band for the first time.

That night, Coffins and I crashed at my mom's pad out in the Pittsburgh suburbs. The next day it was time to drive to Baltimore and spend an oppressive three days at the Maryland Deathfest. I was stoked at the chance to see Coffins on a bigger stage with a larger crowd (and Fest was good enough to pay for Coffins' flights to the US, making the other shows possible)—but not so stoked at the prospect of three days of primarily 3rd generation Cannibal Corpse and Dying Fetus clones. Needless to say, that was the majority of what occurred, so I'll just recount the highlights here.

Coffins are a three-piece, but with their roadie they are four. The roadie, Ryo, is the only one who can really speak any English, and his is fairly limited, too; but we managed to make our points when necessary and communicate them to the other members, Uchino, Koreeda and You.

We stayed at a hotel several miles from the venue in Baltimore, since I made reservations kind of last minute. Apparently everyone else did too, cuz there were many bands at that hotel, including my old buddies in Impaled. We dropped our shit off there upon arrival and headed to the venue where things were just about to get under way. The band got free admission for all three days, but Ryo and I had to pay the 90-dollar three-day ticket. *Fuck!* Definitely not something I would have done had I not been escorting Coffins.

Skarp opened the show with a powerful set. Renae was decked out in a white summery dress to go with the hot Baltimore weather—a far cry from the usual ragged crusty attire, which made her instantly stick out in the sea of black clad fest-goers. I believe they were a last minute addition to the fest, after several other bands had to drop out for various reasons—Always good to see my friends in Skarp, who are on an insane two-and-a-half month tour.

Phobia also is on tour and played Friday as well. Solid set as always, and my Japanese buddies were particularly excited, being long time Phobia fanatics and not having seen them in Japan for many years.

Not much else of note occurred on Friday that I can recall. I spent a lot of time outside knowing I'd likely be stuck at a merch table for much of the rest of the weekend.

Saturday we arrived at the venue by noon. Coffins was playing at 8:30 p.m. We brought all the merch they still had left, but we had nowhere to set it up. No one gave us any details about selling merch or if we even could. Luckily for us, this guy Mike who played in a band called Divine Eve back in the early '90s—an influential band for Coffins—let us share his table. The shirt printer he works for, Sick Serenades, prints Coffins merch, so it made sense. He and I switched off doing shifts at the table so Coffins could enjoy the fest and hang out. This worked out well, and we made about 700 dollars in merch that day for Coffins.

The table was set up in the main room, where the bands played, so we were able to watch bands while working the table. Most merch tables were set up in another separate room away from the show, so we lucked out—especially with the merch area being elevated about a foot off the floor, giving us an obstructed stage view when on our feet.

When it was time for Coffins to play, they, Ryo and I met backstage and got their gear up onstage as Disfear was getting theirs off. They tuned up, turned on and got right to pummeling the eager crowd. After so many fast as fuck bands, Coffins' Autopsy/Hellhammer pace was a welcome change, adding some direly needed variety. The crowd showed great respect to the visiting Japanese death doom lords, fist-pumping and headbanging like true maniacs and giving a response worthy of a headliner. I was several drinks in by this point, and watching from the side of the stage was brilliant. It was so fucking heavy! Doom Death Destruction Over Baltimore!

About four songs in, Uchino walks over to me, looking at me with paranoid eyes. We can't talk, so I'm trying to figure out what's wrong. I look at his guitar and see a string dangling from the fret board. He'd popped one, and the look in his eyes told me he didn't bring in any extras. *Oh shit*. So I'm frantically asking people backstage for a string, but no one is stepping up. Finally the guitar player from Australia's Fuck I'm Dead steps up, offering his guitar. He hands it to Uchino, who tunes it up (well down, actually), and Coffins gets back to playing. It takes a few minutes to recapture the momentum, but by the end of the first post-breakage song, things are all good again. Ryo jumps in on vocals during the second to last song, adding some extra movement and aggression. I can't speak for the crowd, but with the set ending after 35 minutes or so, I was left wanting a lot more. Thankfully we're already working on west coast for 2009.

Aside from Coffins, or maybe along with them, I gotta give the best show of the Fest award to Ghoul. The Bay Area maniaxe pulled out all the stops, with several different costumed characters adding to the theatrics of the masked executioner's thrash attack. Although I don't live in the Bay anymore, I've seen Ghoul many times in the past and they just get better and better. It was great to get a taste of home so far away, and see that as usual, the Bay Area always represents with the best shit and the best bands. They had the pit going about as crazy as I saw it the whole weekend, proving yet again that thrash will always be the best form of metal in the live environment.

Poor Monstrosity—as far as the early '90s death metal bands go they were always sort of second class citizens, never reaching the heights of their fellow Floridians like Obituary and Deicide. Indeed, their biggest claim to fame is probably that they provided Cannibal Corpse with their second vocalist, George Fisher. And at Deathfest the poor bastards had to follow Ghoul. About half the crowd dispersed by that point, and with the exception of the very pumped vocalist, even the Monstrosity dudes seemed to be phoning it in. Kind of a bummer after such a great Ghoul set.

Saturday's headliners were non-corpse-painted British black metallers Anaal Nathrakh (or Anal Mathrock, as I prefer to call them). Back in 2000 or so when I was working for NeCRAPolis Records in Fremont, I recall that Matt Harvey, Jason Balsells and I were very stoked on this band's album, which they'd put up on MP3.com. It was called *The Codex Necro*, and eventually saw release through some label, and remains the crowning jewel in what to my ears is an otherwise fairly average catalog of albums.

The depleted crowd that remained was excited, however, and they ripped through songs that mostly bled together. The clean vocals were just horrid sounding, like Maniac from Mayhem's attempts at clean style, but even worse, and I found myself wishing they just stuck to the harsh stuff. Why do so many metal bands think that "evolving" means trying to sing like some emo band? Still, an OK set, but it seemed like a lot of people were too tired to be bothered after twelve fucking hours of mostly shitty death metal.

Sunday was characterized by more of the same. A lot of the time I spent not working the merch table I spent dozing in the van. Highlights of the day included Impaled's abbreviated set, which for reasons still unknown to me was cut short by Deathfest, pissing off Ross to no end. Dead from Germany played an amazing set of Carcass-inspired comedic grind intensity. Those dudes were fucking A-plus guys to hang out with as well. And the weekend was closed out by the occasionally-reformed Nuclear Assault, whose records I was always lukewarm about, but whose live shows were pretty great fun. Maybe it was the alcohol kicking in, but those 40-plus-year-old dudes thrashed about like young dudes, giving a good lesson in violence that capped the weekend.

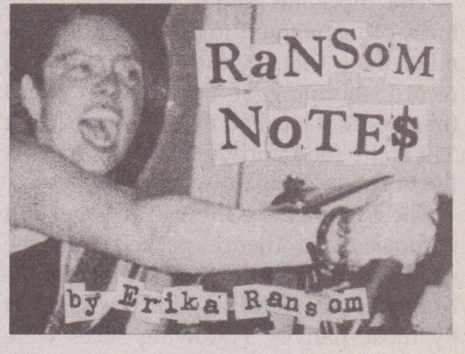
By this time the Coffins crew and I were exhausted, so we went immediately back to the hotel and crashed out. The next morning I drove them straight to the airport, and we took our final pictures and said our goodbyes until they hopefully come back to the US west coast in the spring of '09. All in all an exhausting, often tedious weekend, but ultimately a successful one for my Japanese brothers in Coffins.

The Coffins tour was the culmination of a lot of work for me, but would not have been possible without the help of many people, most notably Andrew Nolan (Andy Stick if you prefer) of The Endless Blockade. Andrew booked the whole tour (with the exception of Deathfest), and made sure Coffins didn't need to do much besides show up and play.

Also gotta say thanks to Quinn Dillon for picking up the band at the airport and receiving all their merch at his house, Christina from Pittsburgh for driving the van around—and continuing to drive for The Endless Blockade, Mike from Sick Serenades/Divine Eve for the merch help, Brian from Watchmaker—and all the other people who let the Coffins dudes crash at their place, Evan and Ryan of Maryland Deathfest, and anyone else who helped. It was a great time for all involved, and the Coffins guys went home without losing any money and hopefully gained some new friends and fans.

Anyway folks after all that, I'm too tapped out on brutality to review any material for you, so I'll get back to the normal bullshit next month. 'Til then…

Don't Try, 120 State Ave. NE #136, Olympia, WA 98501, dontfucking try.blogspot.com



If You Lived Here, You'd Be Home By Now (Part 1)

June 5, 2008. Texas Toast

Where am I? I don't know. I am looking out over green fields and hills, and the heat is rising with the morning. By this afternoon, it will be over 90 degrees. The dogs and I go for our usual walk down the gravel road, trekking through a sauna. The heat seeps into my skin and the dogs pant, big grins and twinkling eyes despite the heat.

There is too much to say, so it all goes static inside my head. I didn't keep a journal this month, instead letting the days pass without pinning them down. I wanted to enjoy the moments. There was no time to trap butterflies and preserve them under glass.

May is my favorite month of the year, my birthday month, when anything feels possible. This year I made a punk rock pilgrimage to the infamous Chaos in Tejas festival in Austin, and then went onwards to Boston for Gretchen's going away bash. It was my birthday present to myself, spending the last of my fall earnings on plane tickets, two weeks on the road, looking forward to seeing my best friends in the world.

In Austin, I met Lucho at the airport. We were both grinning and fresh, excited for the fest. He was carrying his skateboard, and I had a backpack full of video gear. His friend Manolo picked us up in his pickup truck, and so began my week of tacos, heat, sun, punk rock and speaking Spanish with the Mexican Mafia. I got to see so many people from all over the country—exactly what I had hoped for. I also got to see HARD SKIN from the UK and INVASION from Spain—the very same punks I had stayed with in Barcelona last year!

One of my favorite moments included HARD SKIN's set at Emo's on Thursday, the sing along energy of the crowd and the band's notoriously funny commentary. FY FAN from Sweden also blew me away with their energetic attack, and IRON LUNG was excellent as always.

I didn't go to any late-night raging parties afterwards, but instead hung out with our super cool hosts, Manolo and Vernice, and actually got some sleep. It was a change, not feeling hung-over and exhausted after a long night at a festival. It felt good. I might have to try it again sometime.

On Friday afternoon, Omar, Enoc, Lucho and I went to the boat show, passing the punk rock test of waking up early and finding our way to the lake before the boat left shore. Of course, this involved many text messages to sleeping friends, calling about last minute tickets, getting lost, getting snacks, getting directions, getting more directions that actually made sense, listening to rockin' tunes on the way there, and the scenery of Texas pine trees and shrub rolling outside the windows.

Aboard the double-decker party boat, it was all a bit surreal, a punk rock cruise. The water was blue, the sun blazing, the sky dotted with fluffy white clouds on the horizon. Everywhere I looked, there were friends from Philly, San Francisco, Portland, Austin, Boston, Barcelona, London and elsewhere—drinking beers, talking, diving into the water, floating with rafts and watching the bands. Jessica was hanging out by the rail taking in the sun, Karoline had her camera and was taking photos while rockin' to the tunes, Paul did back flips off the top deck, Lucho and Jill sat chillin' in the shade, Marat wore his leather jacket until he just couldn't stand it anymore, and everyone I saw was just enjoying the relaxed atmosphere and the day.

As for music, HARD SKIN played again, which was a total delight. As Sean said, the English excel at being miserable, hot, sunburned bastards in the sun. CRIMINAL DAMAGE played a few rockin' tunes which made me smile, adding a punk rock finish to the boat show as drummer Crystal was sea sick over the rail.

Sunday afternoon, I was surprised to find myself in a canoe with two punks I had just met, paddling down a river somewhere in a public park in Austin.

There was a whole flotilla of punks adrift in canoes, haphazardly running into the banks and each other, trying to steer, going nowhere in particular. I was dressed appropriately, of course, in the same black, thick, long shorts that I always wear and a black t-shirt, wearing my thirteen-hole boots. At least someone let me borrow their sunscreen and I remembered my sunglasses. I paddled along, talking with Rickie (who was precariously perched in the middle of my canoe) about life and punk rock, having a cheap beer while paddling downstream. Perfect.

That night was the third and final show at Emo's, and the whole evening was a blast. By now I had my video gear up and running the way I had hoped, after two days of tweaking audio levels, getting used to shooting at Emo's, finding a place for a second camera, even adjusting the lights between the bands. I was also more relaxed, making time to grab quick beers during equipment changes and chat with friends, remembering that I was here to have fun. Sometimes I get stressed, too worried about the outcome of things. I had to remember that whatever I caught on video would be fine. It is fuckin' punk rock, after all!

Immediately after doors opened, the show was sold out, and over a thousand people packed the place. The lineup was amazing and everyone played well. DESKONOCIDOS from Texas opened the show with an intense set, setting the tone for the rest of the night. REPERCUSSIONS played fast hardcore, with *MRR*'s very own Cissie rockin' out on bass. Stan from SIGNAL LOST was on guitar, and their singer sang with such rage, it felt almost dangerous to be on stage with him. INVASION from Spain had a few technical problems with their vocal feedback box, and then the bass wasn't working, but people quickly rushed to help. When it all came together it was an excellent wall of noise and harmony, and besides that, they really are some of the nicest guys in punk.

I missed most of the INMATES set, as I needed to take a break before the last two bands. The crowd seemed to enjoy them though, with the singer encouraging them, "I want to see some blood up front!"—My cue to go get some air, another beer, and to change tapes back in the sound booth. TRAGEDY played what everyone now expects of them, a full set of loud, dark, powerful tunes. It was great seeing them, and I like them even more over time. Paul and Todd are brothers, also former Tennessee punks! CRUDE played much better than they did on the boat, everything full on.

Then, the moment we had all been waiting for, the LOS CRUDOS reunion, which they were doing as a benefit. It was a perfect ending to the weekend. The last time I saw them play was over ten years ago at a church in Cambridge, when I helped set up a Zapatista benefit show. It was amazing seeing them now, the band still full of blazing energy and conviction. The crowd was absolutely mental, the front of the stage a mass of bodies and people jumping off the stage. Standing next to the drums holding my video camera, with two other video punks videotaping with me as a team on either side of the stage, I could hardly believe it. So many friends up front, singing along, the energy and passion of it all. For lack of anything better to say, it was fuckin' awesome.

Thanks to all of the bands, everyone who made it fun, and Timmy for making this festival happen. See ya punks next year. Hell yeah!

May 21, 2008. Boston Baked Beans

Three days later, Lucho and I were in

Boston, the weather chill and damp—a typical New England spring. The oak trees were shedding, and thousands of their winged seeds floated in the wind and swirled down the street, filling the air down Commonwealth Ave., an enchanted forest in the middle of the city.

I had caught a nasty Texas-sized cold, and now, I could hardly speak. My throat closed up, my eyes watered and snot continuously filled my nose and head. I had tissues stuffed in all my pockets and sounded like a combination of the Godfather and the Wicked Witch of the East. All I desired was sleep, spicy Thai soup and downloaded episodes of *Lost*. Fuckin' hell. What a time to visit.

But besides my sniffles, Gretchen, Tara and I spent hours hanging out on the back porch, catching up, talking about our lives, and finding compass points for the future. In the mornings Gretchen and I had bagels and coffee before she went to work, or we took off on bikes, doing errands around town, enjoying the amazing spring weather, catching moments sitting in the middle of the Public Garden, watching tourists go by while sitting on the grass.

Gretchen was relocating to NYC, a long-anticipated move to spend more time working with the production company she and Megan had started together a few years ago, My Fair Heathen. I was excited for her. I wanted to be in town to see her off, to celebrate her move, to say goodbye. This was an end to an era in our lives.

The once so-called La Rivolta house where she lived would soon be no more. Gretchen and Tara were both moving out by the end of June, and then the apartment would be taken over by random people. I had lived there during my last year in Boston, and it was a place I had called home, even when I didn't live there any more.

After thirteen years of living in Boston, one day I carried my trunks, and my collection of old suitcases that held all my things, down a set of twisty old stairs to the cluttered dark and dusty basement under the house. I bought a ticket west, quit my job as a bike courier, packed two bags for San Francisco and I was off.

I had wanted to make a new start, a fresh beginning, and then it just happened, just like that. I went to visit the Bay, and never came back. A month later, someone moved into my old room at Manton Terrace, and anything I had left behind on the shelves was either given away or stuffed into a closet somewhere.

The key to the house still hung on my keychain, tho', and I always stayed with Gretchen when I was in town, on tour or visiting. It always felt like I was just another roommate back in town. There were old posters of mine hanging on the walls and the bathroom was full of my old 'zines. All of the mugs and plates I left behind were still in the kitchen, and my leather jacket was hanging in the kitchen closet. Each visit we would think about recycling the last keg we drank together when I left town, and then forget about it. I think, even now, the keg is still hiding in the weeds next to the house.

On Saturday, Gretchen's going away party was a blast. We were in the backyard on a beautiful clear day, sitting in one half of an old café booth with blue vinyl seats propped up against the wall of an ancient brick garage. The yard didn't have grass anymore, just weeds and dirt, a few tall gangly trees, and a smattering of tough ivy against the wall, but it didn't matter. We had balloons and streamers and 150 cans of Pabst chilling in a cooler with ice. We had a box of frozen veggie burgers, a bag of buns, a plastic bottle of mustard, a can of lighter fluid and a pack of matches, perfect ingredients for a summer cookout. There was, of course, a boom box connected to an extension cord that ran into the house, and we were listening to our favorite tunes.

Brendan joked it was like the "Boston punk scene circa 1995," with so many old friends hanging out. Chris and Jen, Brian in his suede vest, Hank, Tara, Bill, Howie and a crew of bike messengers who showed up late. Matt Cupcakes, Jen Millis, Danielle and Jon also stopped by before heading off to drink beers by the train tracks.

We were there until dusk, and then continued into the night. The BBQ grill was transformed into a fire pit, and we burned a pile of sticks and fallen limbs while sitting in a circle around the blaze. Towards the end of our treasure trove of Pabst, I hijacked the stereo and made everyone listen to the Spider Cunts and the Restarts. I gave away my first leather jacket and my old boots and when my voice was finally, totally gone, I snuck off to bed.

This was why I had come to Boston, to say goodbye to this house, to finally move my deadwood out, to rekindle friendships and connections. What do we really have, if not our friends and those we care about?

Before I left town, the gang all went to my favorite dive bar one last time, the Silhouette. Gretchen, Tara, Brendan, Brian, Lucho and I shared a few rounds, and cheered until they kicked us out, and I said goodbye, for now.

Random End Notes

Listen to Chrissie Victim's punk radio show on WMBR, Cambridge. It is part of the infamous and long-standing *Late Risers Club*. He's on the air every Monday, and you can listen to it on the web. Hell fuckin' yeah.

I saw a show at the Rats Cellar before I left town, and it was an amazing space. I was impressed. Cheers to Ryan and everyone else who helped create this underground DIY venue. I couldn't believe how clean and spacious the basement was. There was a proper wooden stage, a PA, even lights. Compared to the last Boston basement show I went to, I didn't fear for my safety, I could actually hear the bands, and I didn't hit my head on the rafters. They also have a DIY recording studio and space where people live. Awe-some.

Thanks to everyone who wrote me last month, I appreciate your letters, it is great hearing from folks. It keeps me motivated to keep this column going. I'm in my sixth year now. Bizarre. As always, thanks to the hard working volunteer crew that puts out *MRR* every month. Independent media, and especially magazines, are becoming a rare breed, so your support of this fanzine is important. Without readers who buy it from a shop or get a subscription, and the people who help distribute it, there would be no *MRR*.

Cheers to everyone I saw in May! Solidarity and blazing guitars, Erika (e_bitchcrew@yahoo.com)

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

Last month I naively typed the following while in the comfort of my heated, brick home in Melbourne, Australia: "As you read this, Straightjacket Nation would have finished our US tour. Next month I'll probably have something to say about it as I'll be in some internet café in Baltimore attempting to write this column. At the moment I'm getting ready to leave tomorrow. Thanks for having us, America. Thanks for the diseases."

We spent the past couple days driving down the Californian coast, driving through holes in redwood trees and taking photographs of wood carvings. As I write this we're in San Francisco, ready to get tough. But first, some short words on the foreign junk of the past month.

I haven't been at home in almost two months, so the stack of Peruvian thrash demos and Madagascan junk diaries in my bedroom will be discussed the moment I step off the plane. Here are three records I've picked up while touring that aren't from North America, Sweden or Japan, and they are all recordings from 1983/1984 that have been unreleased on vinyl until now.

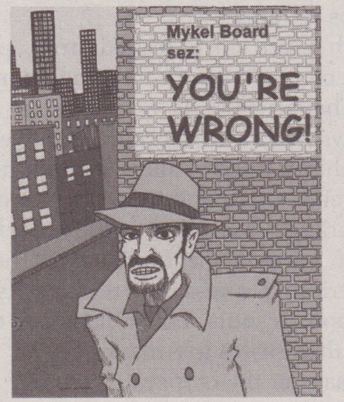
From Finland, the six-song VAURIO 7" (intended for Propaganda Records?) has been released courtesy of Yannick/Feral Ward. The sleeve art is original and as intended for release in 1983, but 'stead of the chaotic Finnish thrash I expected when I pulled the shoelace outta my Doc and strapped it around my head, this is frantic sneering, snotty 4/4 punk rock with plenty of killer hooks. It should be really easy to find… I recommend it highly.

SUBVERSION (Belgium), as I understand from brief discussions with the Game Of The Arseholes arsehole, recorded this demo in 1983, and it was a fixture on tape trade lists for people who have heard of DISCHARGE. Evidently, SUBVERSION have heard of DISCHARGE, and their attempts to perform subtle cover versions of their tunes does not go unappreciated here in the "All Foreign Junk" corner of *Maximum*. This is a great 7" reissue of the demo, with new artwork and a dedication to Kawakami Disclose.

The DELIRIUM TREMENS 7" (La Vida Es En Mus) features cassette demo recordings from Spain in 1984. When Invasion was touring, we had the opportunity to play a couple of shows with them and they told me that often Spanish punk bands from this time didn't have a tape to tape dubbing machine, so they'd record their demo onto a tape, put another tape in and record the songs again. It's to my understanding that this 7" comes from one of two known recordings of these songs, but I'll file a correction next month. On this 7" you'll find some perfect seedy and depraved sounding hardcore songs, and you should know by now whether the sound of a Spanish punk band recording their demo in 1984 is going to appeal to your sensibilities.

Finally, I'd like to turn your attention to the MASSTRAUMA *The Adoration Of The Devils Ass* 7". It has finally seen release by those sensitive gentlemen at Endless Blockades. In their brief tenure as classy representative of Sydney hardcore punk, MASSTRAUMA were the best band to see and play with. A sketchy, messy combination of the power violent thrash and the scummy hardcore sound… like GG singing for NO COMMENT—but worse. Way, way worse. And, you know, I mean it.

Next month, more foreign junk. If you play punk, hardcore, garage noise or any music with a bit of grit and rawness to it, or if you write a fanzine that loosely covers the same sonic territory, and you DON'T live in the US, Japan or Sweden, get in touch. My address is DANIEL STEWART: PO BOX 239 NORTH CARLTON VICTORIA 3054 AUSTRALIA. If you'd like to email me, try distorttheworld@gmail.com.



"There is a physical difference between the white and the black races which I believe will forever forbid the two races living together...while they do remain together there must be the position of superior and inferior, and I as much as any man am in favor of having the superior position assigned to the white race."
—Abraham Lincoln

"There are few, I believe, in this enlightened age, who will not acknowledge that slavery as an institution is a moral and political evil."
—Col. Robert E. Lee, President, Confederate States of America, December 27, 1856

Somewhere, there are people who can hold something in their hands, put it down on a desk or table, turn around... and when they turn back, that object is *still* on the desk or table. Right where they put it.

Somewhere there are people who, when something slips from their hands, that thing will drop onto the floor and make a sound. Those people will look down at the floor and the object dropped will actually be there. Right on the floor, waiting to be picked up. That somewhere is not here. Those people are not me.

I was madder than a paraplegic at a three-legged race. I put that stupid letter somewhere, and now I can't find it. I wanted to quote from it. From the Campaign to Save Tibet or something like that. To show the stupidity—the illogical sappiness. Instead, the piles of paper on my desk shift and hide and apparently eat the offending document.

So, I sit here and scratch my ass... Ouch! Where did that come from? Everybody's got pimples on their ass, but this one really hurts. It's a little mound, with a sensitive spot right in the middle. Maybe a whitehead.

I pick at it. FUCK! Not only does it hurt, but it sends some kind of wave through my body. A trigger... letting loose a bullet somewhere else. On my side. Under my left arm. Like a nail driven into the skin. A pimple on my ass coming out under my arm. I don't get it.

I guess it comes from connections in the nervous system. My ass connected to under my arm. Who knew? Sometimes the connections surprise me. It's what doctors call *sympathetic pain*. I don't feel very sympathetic.

Oh yeah. Tibet. What is it with Americans? Right and left. Supporting Chechnya, Tibet, Kosovo, who-knows-wheresville. Independence? Yo Yanquis, look in your own back yard—or at least at your own history. We didn't fight the Civil War over slavery. Lincoln didn't "free the slaves" until the war had already started. "Emancipation" was a cynical move to boost the union army and create chaos in the South. Only *Southern* slaves were freed. Get it? Lincoln fought to KEEP THE UNION TOGETHER. That's it. Fuck the slaves.

"Lincoln's proclamation promised to emancipate blacks in areas currently in rebellion (in which Lincoln had no jurisdiction), and *did not emancipate slaves in the areas that had not seceded or were mili-*

tarily re-occupied." —From an Amazon.com review, *Forced Into Glory, Abraham Lincoln's White Dream,* by Lerone Bennett.

But why not let Lincoln himself tell you what was most important:

"If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it; and if I could do it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that."

That he did it was one of the great tragedies of American—and world—history. For more than the last half-century, the US has been on the wrong side of every war. If we were *two* countries, we wouldn't have half the world-dominating power we have now. We would never have entered—or started those wars. Thanks(?) to Lincoln, we're not two countries.

Hu Jintao is the Abraham Lincoln of China. You cannot support independence for Tibet unless you support independence for the Confederate States of America. The wars are the same. The war is not for freedom, or against slavery. The war is not about human rights.

But why not let Hu Jintao himself tell you what's most important:

"Our conflict with the Dalai clique is not an ethnic problem, not a religious problem, nor a human rights problem. It is a problem of either preserving national unity or splitting the motherland."

Tibet has been part of China since Genghis Khan brought them together in the 1200s. Genghis Khan named the Dalai Lama Dalai Lama in the 13th century.

Even after the dissolution of that empire, Tibet was still a part of greater China rule. Since the founding of the Republic in 1911, it has *never* been independent.

They tried issuing their own passports to a few people after World War II. According to Wikipedia:

"In 1947-49, Lhasa sent a 'Trade Mission' led by the Tsepon (Finance Minister) W.D. Shakabpa to India, Hong Kong, Nanjing (then the capital of China), the US, and Britain. The visited countries were careful not to express support for the claim that Tibet was independent of China and did not discuss political questions with the mission."

That's it. The only "Tibetan Passports" ever issued. Not much independence there.

Lincoln fought the U.S. Civil War for unity after 90 years of nationhood. Tibet has been part of China for more than 800 years.

Whoa, there, Beastie Boy. Don't get uppity. I support independence for Tibet. I support independence for *everyone*. The Confederate States, Kosovo, Brooklyn. I support it for Dalai Lamists and Texans who want three wives and 12-year-old brides. I support Farrakhanville and DavidDukedom. I give the green light to Puritania and Pervertistan.

But I don't want to hear complaints about Rednecks and Yahoos with Confederate Flags in the back of their pick-up trucks. That Tibetan flag you're waving is a confederate flag. It means *independence*.

See? You look at a small part of the world, one far away. You *tsk tsk* and *aww ain't it awful,* but you don't see how the sympathetic pain leads from your ass directly to your armpit.

I say, live your life how you want to. Make your own laws. Have your own country. The only requirement should be that people can come and go as they please. No visas. No residency permits. No closed borders. If you don't like it, leave. Go someplace else and be welcomed. There is a country for everyone. It's only customs and immigration that keeps us out.

Oh yeah, on a related front, people who complain about free trade don't get it. The problem is *not* that free trade allows too much corporate movement. It's that it doesn't allow enough human movement. General Motors can move its factories to Mexico, but those Mexicans can't move their families to the US. American Express can relocate its tech support to India, but Indians can't relocate themselves to America.

I say, let the corporations move factories to Mexico if the pay is lower there, but then let the Mexicans come here if the pay is higher here. Open the gates. Instead of an ocean-to-ocean wall, there should be an ocean-to-ocean welcome mat. If corporations are free, why not people?

If corporations are allowed to vote with their dollars, average citizens should be allowed to vote with their feet.

In fact, I've got a plane ticket to Trinidad on my desk, right now—at least it *was* on my desk. I know I had it here someplace.

PART TWO: Reaction to my last column was fun, though predictable.

"Mykel, if there's nothing we can do to help the world, we're doomed."

Right now I say, "Yep." Buy a fiddle and play it while Rome burns.

If it were legal, I'd say I was misinterpreted. I'd say that I didn't mean there was nothing you could do... only that recycling your soup cans or eating organic tofu is not going to do it. I'd say one person *can* make a difference—if that person blew up a Wal-Mart or took out a Supreme Court judge. But those things are illegal, and I'm not interested in advocating anything illegal. So I won't say any of that stuff.

I will repeat—every little bit *doesn't* count. One person (except in ways I would never advocate) *cannot* make a difference—unless that person has tons of money and tons of power. As for you, me and the next guy: the best we can do is not make things too miserable for the gal next door.

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to email comments on the column]

—> Material for this column came from several books, either directly or indirectly. Among them: Jim Goad: *Redneck Manifesto,* Lerone Bennett: *Forced Into Glory, Abraham Lincoln's White Dream,* Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman: *Time on The Cross* and *Wikipedia.*

—> *Worse than famine war or disease dept*: Jim Salinger works at New Zealand's National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research; he recently wrote that droughts in Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. Pacific Northwest are causing shortages of hops and Barley. That means that beer prices could "skyrocket."

And I was gonna write a column on how I don't give a shit about global warming... *This is serious!*

Maybe he had his head up his ass dept: The AP reports that the New York State Supreme Court ruled that Brian Persuad was not due reparations from Columbia Presbyterian Hospital.

Persuad, a construction worker, had sued—the complaint was that doctors at the hospital tried "to examine the rectum of the construction worker."

Why?

"The construction worker was hit on the head by a falling wooden beam."

Persuad's lawyers have not yet decided if they'll appeal the decision.

—> *Can you say Duh? dept*: Which place in the US has the highest percentage of people who "speak a language other than English at home?" Puerto Rico, at 95%: according to Databank USA. Not such a thrilling discovery.

But, California is number two, then New Mexico, Texas, Arizona, and New York—pretty conservative areas, except *maybe* New York. Weird, huh?

The places where the *fewest* people speak another language at home include Kentucky and West Virginia. *That* makes sense. Ok, Hillary, why don't you take them and make your own country?

—> *A prize you can't live with dept*: Kyle sent me this advert for "Pet Idol," like "American Idol," except you vote for the best pet. I'm not sure if you vote for their performance or just photos, but the kicker is the *prize* for winning. Yeah, you get toys and treats, but you also get a gift certificate— to an animal funeral home. Hubba hubba!

—> *Maybe she was full of shit dept:* In Ness City, Kansas, the sheriff is recommending pressing charges in the case of a woman who sat on her boyfriend's toilet for so long that her body became stuck to the seat. Apparently, the woman was sitting there for 2 years. During that time, her skin grew around the seat.

The sheriff said the boyfriend was guilty of "mistreatment of a dependent adult." The boyfriend pleads not guilty, saying that his girlfriend "has a phobia about leaving the bathroom."

—> *I thought glasses protected you dept:* In Hammond, Indiana, police charged a teacher with hitting his 11-year-old son with a wrench. The reason? The boy fell asleep while wearing his glasses.

Remember in all those old movies where the wimp gets out of being beat up by *donning* a pair of glasses? What's the world coming to?

—> *Another reason to love Wal-Mart dept:* It was sad enough that Debbie Shank was a Wal-Mart employee (though she was slightly lucky that laws and public opinion forced that monster to give her health care). She sure needed it when an accident damaged her brain and confined her to a wheelchair. Insurance benefits required the mega-store to set aside $417,000 for her care.

Shank and her hubby also sued the trucking company responsible for the accident. They were awarded a cool million—much of it going to the lawyers.

And Wal-Mart?

They wanted the $417,000 back! No shit. They said they had a contract that "allows the company to retrieve damages won by employees in lawsuits." Holy fuck!

Good thing it's illegal to advocate arson. Otherwise, some folks might do it. Not me, of course.

Of course.

—>*What happened to the good stuff dept:* Back in the old days of VCRs and videotapes, I used to get all kinds of homemade vids from my readers. Yeah, *those* kind of homemade vids.

These days, that has, er... dried up. I'm forced to go to xtube.com where I can look at other people's homemade vids. Mostly headless guys jerking off.

It's okay, but it's not the same as watching someone pet themselves and say, "Ohh.... Mykel... this is for you... right now... I'm thinking of you... you make me so hot..."

So how 'bout it? Send me a homemade DVD or a CD-Rom with an .avi file or ten!!

As usual the address is: Mykel Board, PO Box 137, Prince St. Station, New York, NY 10012

PHOTOCARD
Name of Holder: Mr.Mrs.Miss.Ms.
Layla Gibbon
Valid for use only by person shown with a ticket bearing the same number
BJO 5499

Summer Jams

Death *Politicians in my Eyes/Keep on Knockin* 45. Death, were an African American proto-punk band from early '70s Detroit—clearly you can't go wrong! I like this better than MC5; it's nastier, and the riffs are fucking catchy and tough as shit. Sound of the streets, hard stares and back talking good times. I listened to it on repeat for an hour when I first got it, so... will... you. You can download this from the Chunklet website, or numerous other punk orientated forums and message boards. Or pay zillions of dollars for their 7" on eBay.

Maniax—we got sent two copies of this CD, and each one instantly had numerous people's initials all over it (Can I review this? Can I?). Not sure who won that battle but me and Martin drove round town dropping off issues of the new *MRR* at record stores whilst singing, "Wendy O! *Oh*! I love you so." (Can I be Yr Butcher Baby?) I already played another song off of this on an *MRR* radio show where I got in trouble for going over the time limit. Maniax! Teenagers from fucking Fresno circa 1980—they played shows at the Mab, they got played on *MRR* radio when Tim 'n' Jello 'n' them were in charge, and were also on the *Not So Quiet*... comp. As far as I can tell, most of the music contained within is boom box recordings, the CD is 45 songs long, and maybe you aren't ready for that amount of this style. Maybe four or five here and there would be perfect if you aren't equipped for the reality of teenage times in a shitty town. *But come on*!! Wise up. This just exemplifies the genius of bored youth in the face of a new idea, when kids reclaimed music from the tomb of '70s pop radio and Rolling Stone mag. I am sure there were a million bands like this in 1980. This is so charming and ridiculous and awesome and you need to get it together and get this. Maniaxmusic.com Also: Can someone interview them for *MRR*?? Like right now?

General Interest demo—Sarcastic, like an older brother who's always one step ahead but still annoying. I like the guitar sound—it reminds me of something I can't think of, like *KBD* kreepy melodics mushed up with Monorchid or Metamatics even?? It has this post-punk influenced DC band, and then a sharp-witted beach hardcore thing (which is an incongruous reference I know) that reminds me of a weird combination of all of the above. Bass is deep 'n' dumb. Dunno. My writing on the subject of this tape is troubled but I personally would send off for it; I did even! It's snotty and funny and smart and there's nothin' wrong with that, huh? (Four bucks? Three bucks? 59 Mytle St., Somerville, MA 02145)

Martin scored the Kalashnikov 45 for a typical Martin-style twenty bucks. "Oh, this Betong Hysteria 7"? I found it in a box in an alley behind the show space, etc. etc. etc." Anyway whatever the story of his big score, he played this for me and I was totally blown away. The singer's voice is incredible, initially it reminded me of a less Exene'd-out Mai of Gorilla Angreb. Her voice is so much more restrained and cooler sounding though, and I am aware I liken *way* too many lady singers to Mai. This is such a great 7", I am not sure if it has been *Bloodstained Across Denmark* or *Killed by Death* or anything, but someone should just fuckin' reissue it! Just ruling awesome Danish punk with the best kind of lady punk vocals. This just in from Shit-Fi productions: "Layla, I could've sworn I heard Kalashnikov was getting reissued, but that may not happen due to everything in KBN going haywire after Ungdomshuset was evicted. There was apparently a second Kalashnikov 7" recorded at the time, which never made it past test pressings (or something like that). I think there's a later record that is wave. Members were also in another band called Diarre before Kalashnikov, who were on a tape comp and released a demo ltd to something like 25 (which no one has). Diarre is extremely killer raw, simple punk. One song is called 'I Hate the New Romantics'!"

Silla Electrica will have a 7" out at some point this summer, courtesy of one half of the Kill Test record label, ie: Golnar. Not sure what the name of her new endeavor is. I already raved about the demo, not sure where you can get a hold of one at this point, so just wait for the 7". The dueling male/femme vocals with a *raw* Spanish punk vengeance style will make you spit blood for weeks. Total frayed at the edges frenzy, parts of it made me think of like the Tyrades trying to play Rappasagglia, but as if garage rock as it is now didn't ever exist. It's kind of got the violence of the Tyrades thru the filter of some Italian classix, but is way more street somehow than Tyrades!! You know, if you like punk rock that would sound good whether it came out in '79 or '08. Make sure you get this record dudes! No contact info but I will pass it on when I get it! Spanish punk for you thoughtful trashed types.

Brilliant Colors are from San Francisco. The last time I saw them play was at this accidental all-girl-bands show at the Knockout, with a band with the worst name— Schmool, and Grass Widow too. Schmool kind of sounded like Y Pants but I am not sure they would have ever heard of that band. They had nurse/insect costumes on and were very young, and initially the costume wacky factor made me wanna old lady it at the bar. I am glad I didn't because the music they made was truly strange and out of synch in a compelling awesome way. They brought to mind Y Pants, because the music was kind of creepy but also full of wonder, rather than the void-like fury of the no wave; also kind of Slits demos style, great Palmolive-styled drums, really wild and unrestrained sounding. Brilliant Colors have changed rhythm sections since I last saw them, which has made them less C86 shambolic, and tighter, sharper focused somehow. I got a definite Bats feel, maybe even The Clean; some New Zealand was stuck in their throats for sure, but also a total dreamy Shop Assistants wash of veiled threats. They were fucking great, and I am sure they have a Myspace, but SF check them out live for sure! Even the hardcore kids were diggin' on the sound.

Grass Widow played afterwards and instantly created a lady-pit of frantic girls who knew all the words. They reminded me of the New Bloods—that sing-song-y Raincoats feel with more of a post-punk angularity, however. Grass Widow was the most popular band. People were freaking out, it was kind of like what I imagine watching Against Me! would be like if they were an all-girl band that sounded like Raincoats?! The fans were all singing along fervently and totally losing it, like girls did at Sleater Kinney shows, but the fervent unison-ness of it all made me think of having to watch this horrific Against Me! vid at a random party a few years back. They sound like a less world-beat/primal New Bloods, so I guess Raincoats-lite is the new girl band sound? (Kind of cool if it's true.) It was a great show, even if I was a little lukewarm on the headliners. It's a rad feeling being at an accidental all-girl show, where every band was lady-fueled like it was no big thing, as things should be you know?

I stole the below from some email newsletter I got; read it and realize that we need to know what The Cardboards, the Shakes and Hans Brinker and the Dykes sound like! And also we need to see the Pittsburgh punk Super-8 freak out too!!

"A program of transmissions from Pittsburgh featuring small-gauge oddities, punk documents from the late 1970s, home movies, industrial films of heavy industry and selections from the George Romero nostalgia vault. Playing off a combination of home movies that perform celebrity, performance in the punk underground and role playing in the silent film, this program presents aural and visual interplays and turns the tropes of sensorial convention on its ear: a vampire film by deaf children, a punk documentary, sound problems on the Super-8 mag track, a silent work print version of a sound film. Featuring a variety of films I saw originally while living in Pittsburgh in the late 1970's and early 1980's, these works are seared into my memory as fantastic microgems of cinematic invention and sublime eccentricity. Featured in the program:

Miss You, Natalka Voslakov, Super-8, 1979, 3 mins. Natalka's kids Zoe and Zoltan perform the Rolling Stones' classic.

Nosferatu in WPSD, Super-8, 1979, 18 mins. A Super 8mm rendition of the vampire story performed by kids from the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf under the guidance of their teacher Tippi Comden.

Debt Begins at 20, Stephanie Beroes, 16mm, 1980, 40 mins. Part fiction part documentary, with music by The Cardboards, The Shakes, Hans Brinker and The Dykes.

The Beach Bunnies at the Electric Banana, Peggy Ahwesh, Super-8, 1980, 10 mins. Acting out at the punk club one night. About Peggy Ahwesh:

"Peggy Ahwesh came of age with 1970s feminism, Super-8 film and the punk underground. She works in film and video, is on the editorial board of Ediciones la Calavera, a book publishing initiative. Ahwesh plays music with Barbara Ess [from Y Pants!!] in the band Radio/Guitar. She teaches film and video production at Bard College."

This, along with a conversation in the kitchen with Justin has made me realize that we need to do a "punks in the movies" themed issue of *MRR*, covering shit like this as well as the more "conventional" cinematic punker moments. If you have any ideas let us know! I am already thinking about that Chicago punk movie, the Cleveland hardcore movie, the Brazillian one, Joe Rees of Target Video. There's also a crazy rad thing I saw once as a kid and never again since, called something like *Girls Bite Back*, which had Slits, Mannisch Depressiv, Lilliput and other early '80s/late '70s Euro ladies. And of course, *Ladies and Gentlemen the Fabulous Stains* is getting a reissue this fall. There's *Times Square*, which I have never seen even—shit I only saw *Repo Man* for the first time this year! The Screamers movie, *Population One*, that for some reason Subterranean still has a bunch of on VHS, and yet I never manage to get it together to have enough money to get one when I am in the warehouse.

Greg Ginn is now in a band called Jambang. Think about it.

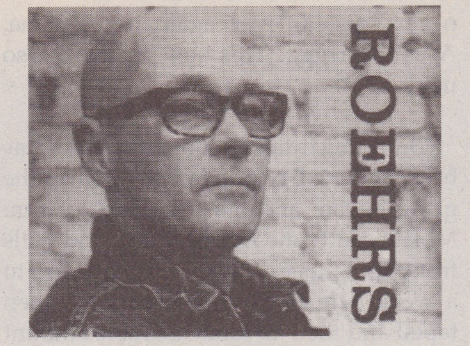
I am in my last two weeks of just being a general shitworker at *Maximum*, before I take over for Martin as distribution coordinator in July. I don't think I have ever been more consumed by the magazine; constantly thinking about it and talking about it to the point of being informed that I was only allowed to talk about *MRR* for three hours straight as a one time thing.

Nearly everyone I have talked to that's slightly outside of the magazine's orbit has informed me that we should give up on print media and just turn the mag into a blog or something to that effect, which is kind of disheartening. And ridiculous?? At any rate, each medium has its functions and advantages, and I wrote out a huge impassioned argument about the importance of independent print media but was somehow unable to put it in here. It was kind of exhausting to write and probably even worse to read. *MRR* rulez. I think (know) I am the first distribution coordinator with a column, and hopefully now, even though I am going to be working two close to full-time jobs at once, I will still have things to write about beyond recounting hilarious hijinks at the bulk-mail drop-off.

Write me punx. I am a lousy correspondent, I warn you; layla@maximumrocknroll.com

If you are interested in distributing *MRR*, distro@maximumrocknroll.com

whatwewantisfree.blogspot.com is where I put the old columns from here on thee internet.



DON'T BE FOOLED

Fuck! Portland thrashers DEAD SECTION has unleashed their *World's Grey* EP on you fucks! The clever Pissed Misanthrope label from PDX is proud to abuse your delicate punk sensibilities with this slice of rough-hewn punk bile, complete with the mandatory metal evisceration! DEAD SECTION provides the ferocious bass and drum death-machine with deep guttural singing on top! The mixture is guaranteed to make you little Macy's punks uncomfortable! The DEAD SECTION *World's Grey* EP is a bleak record that will ruin your day, possibly your whole week! Well done punk rockers! Contact Pissed Misanthrope Records, Portland, Oregon.

This month you fucks lucked out! In addition to the ferocious RIPPING HEADACHE EP that I had the pleasure of reviewing in this months issue, Adult Crash records from Denmark offers you manic punks the INSTÄNGD EP! This hardcore is possessed by Satan and fairly kicks and screams out of the grooves! The *Konkret Och Brutal* EP hits the ground running and never loses the sick momentum! Stripped down recording techniques and raw punk bile power this into a nefarious location – not safe for the Myspace/limp-dick/mall rats! These violent thrashers from Umea, Sweden come to destroy your safe-as-milk punk rock world! Contact Adult Crash records immediately to obtain RIPPING HEADACHE and INSTÄNGD EPs. You will not be disappointed! Adult Crash Records, PO Box 604, 2200 Copenhagen N, Denmark, k-townhc@riseup.net

Scotty's infamous Tank Crimes records from Oakland, California has another barnburner for you mohawks and skins! MOUTH SEWN SHUT shares an EP with INSTANT ASSHOLE and you have heard an INSTANT ASSHOLE EP recently on Tank Crimes and these two songs do not deviate from the formula. With INSTANT ASSHOLE playing live and issuing prolific recordings we will not require Jello Biafra to produce new punk anthems for the kids. Turn the EP over and you will find the exciting gem of this split EP. MOUTH SEWN SHUT goes off real hard on "Don't Be Fooled"!! This shit scorched the surface of the motherfucking planet! The nasty vocals and relentless chug of the guitar and bass on this cut make for a threatening chunk of punk rock danger! Wait! MOUTH SEWN SHUT doesn't let you punks off that easy! The second MOUTH SEWN SHUT track is "Drunk White Jesus" and the track is engorged with venomous lyrics and bombastic kill-em-all hardcore riffs! Fucking great! Your last MOUTH SEWN SHUT CD is not an accurate reference point for judging this new EP! This could well be some of the most powerful shit you have ever heard by MOUTH SEWN SHUT! Order your copy as soon as possible from Tank Crimes records, PO Box 3495, Oakland, CA 94609.

Fucking A! ANTI-YOU has dumped some hateful, seething, putrid punk on you pencil-neck geeks! Side A offends every corpuscle in your fragile being! We steam through "Info OD" and "Nothing New"—inspirational, foul, bilge—brilliant! Side-B offers more thoroughly unpalatable punk drek. ANTI-YOU hits their new zenith with "Fashion Victim Alert" or "F.V.A." as they bellow—this shit is fucking monumental! This "F.V.A." riff rivals anything that TEAR IT UP or THE RITES have offered! Fucking great! ANTI-YOU finish the horrible mess with the title cut "Johnny Baghdad." Fuck all! This frantic plea for attention is a sword cutting through the lifeless morass of current punk mediocrity! Fuck yes! Long live ANTI-YOU! Contact Puke'n'Vomit Records, PO Box 3435, Fullerton, CA 92834, www.pukeandvomitrecords.com Until next month – See you fucks at the bar!

SOAKED IN JUSTIN'S BLOOD.

STREET JUSTICE

My take on violence is as follows: I'm generally not a violent person, hell, the last time I got in a fight was some years ago when some drunken wannabe frat boy from BU randomly walked up to me on the street at 2am while I was walking home from a (losing) night of poker with friends and accused me of harassing his sister earlier that night at some party that I wasn't even at and just punched me in the side of the head. At that point what was I to do but destroy this half-wit *and* his friend that was trying to pull him back? When all was said and done, his friend, rather hilariously, continued beating the crap out of him for putting him in such a stupid situation as I walked toward the Cambridge Street bridge (as featured in a scene from the original *Thomas Crown Affair*) and home. There are just certain situations where flight is not an option. It's a survival instinct and a natural human thing. Sometimes though, you also just can't help it and there is no other way to get your point across. What's the point of this, you ask? Well, someone that works for this very magazine, someone that we trust, is taking advantage of that fact and has been stealing brand new records out of the to-be-reviewed bin. This is the second time it's happened in the last six-or-so months and most recently stole FIVE FUCKING LPS!! You have got to be a complete loser and absolute fucking coward to steal records from here. These were brand new records that you can get anywhere and if you can't afford to buy them, boo-fucking-hoo. This is a business and a home, not some fucking collective free-box. Not only are you taking advantage of us, but you are taking away from a punk record archive that is the only one like it in the entire world, and you are ruining things for the other 60-plus Shitworkers that come through these doors every month by forcing us to question intentions. So, next time you come by, and unfortunately this will fall on everyone and not just the pathetic piece of shit responsible, don't be surprised if things seem a little awkward. It's an inevitability and as much as I'd like it not to happen… The bottom line is this: you have proven that you are absolute scum on multiple occasions (it's easy to profile that it was the same person when all of these stolen records are similar in style/scene) and when we find out who you are, and we will find out, it's gonna get nasty and after you're "dealt with," we will drag you through the mud so bad that you are never trusted, ever again, by anyone. Aaaahhhrrrggg. This shit makes me so mad.

****

On a much lighter note, the haus has been chock full of punks from all over the globe of late and it's been tons of fun. Most recently the Aussie buoys and gulls from Straightjacket Nation spent close to a week here at the Maxipad and green taped and filed an immeasurable amount of records. I'd just like to say that on top of being a face-ripping top-notch band, Dan, Emily, Dave, Al, and Clint are first-class individuals and I had tons of fun enjoying your company and you are welcome back any time. Fuckin' sick! It still makes me sad to look at the ping-pong table all put away. Straightjacket Nation and Needles' sets last week at Balazo gallery were probably the highlights of the year as far along with Walls in the way of live shows. Needles just sounded so fuckin' nasty and Straightjacket Nation kept that fire burning straight through to the end of the show. Pure bliss. But back to what I was saying, besides those Aussie bogans, long-time *MRR* contributor and scene-reporter of far away locales, Luk Haas, finally made his first trip ever to the U.S. of A. and spent some time here at the house. While he was around, not only did he record two one-hour radio shows of exotic punk from all corners of the globe (one of which is already up on our site), he took the time to sit down with Layla, Cissie, and I to let us interview him for this rag. Look for that in the next month or two. Luk's stories and travels make me feel like a complete failure.

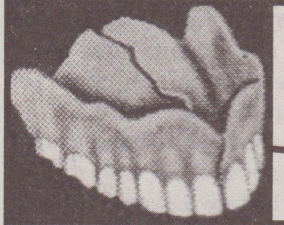
****

The land of Maximumium has been a land of great change recently and since I failed to do so in my last column, I feel it's only right that I extend my hand to welcome in Ms Layla Gibbon as *MRR*'s new distro coordinator. She's basically been at the job for two months now and has come in like a forest fire to burn out the old dead undergrowth and stimulate new growth and forward motion. I'm glad she's here, she's definitely taken Martin's kick-in-the-ass-business. On a similar trajectory I think this is as good a time as any to announce that I will be stepping down as content coordinator. It's really crazy to me that this is my tenth issue as coordinator of *Maximum*. This decision just made sense, really, but I will stick around as long as it is necessary to fill my shoes. We are working on a couple leads right now and we will keep you informed.

****

I think it's high time I pony up for a Judge *New York Crew* on Schism. Got one you don't need? Or an older Judge shirt size large?

As always, get in touch at: justin@maximumrocknroll.com. I've also recently started a blog of old columns and some random stuff… a work in progress at: deadstareforlife.blogspot.com.



NOTHING EVER LASTS

CISSIE

It's really weird to me that the corporate music industry is once again showing interest in the underground punk scene. All of the lines are beginning to get blurred with Fucked Up and Jay Reatard signing to Matador, Sub Pop showing interest in Sex Vid, *Vice* magazine, MTV 2 specials, blah, blah, blah. Punk will never have a permanent place in mainstream culture and it shouldn't. Punk is for the punks after all. Any bands that take part in the industry circus are ego-tripping. This subculture doesn't exist outside of basements and warehouses or tiny under-supported record stores and the like. If you're looking to be famous then fuck right off into the bright lights of Warner Music Group. Industry officials have no interest in subculture other than the money that they can make off of it. Bands that participate in the game are exploiting the underground for the sake of the corporate world, plain and simple. It's old news. My thoughts are not revelatory, especially for *Maximum*, but one would think that people would've learned a lesson about the music industry and the corporations that they support by now. Corporate punk sucks, and fuck major labels and their quasi brethren. Shit's a dead-end street, but it's perfect for those lacking in character. I guess it's time to separate the wheat from the chaff to see who's really interested in the long-term sustainability of an underground punk culture.

On a different but semi-related note, major labels are starting to look towards vinyl as a sustainable music medium again. Funny 'cos I thought they wrote vinyl off for good in the early '90s. Right now just about every single pressing plant is incredibly backed up making REM and Raconteurs records. This sudden glut has caused a lot of independent label releases to get pushed back and the Bum Kon LP that *Maximum* was supposed to co-release last month is now delayed until September. Sorry to everyone that is anticipating buying this on vinyl. We have the test presses and the music rips, so hold on for a couple more months 'cos money has won yet again and the people that have kept vinyl alive for the past 15 years are getting the shaft.

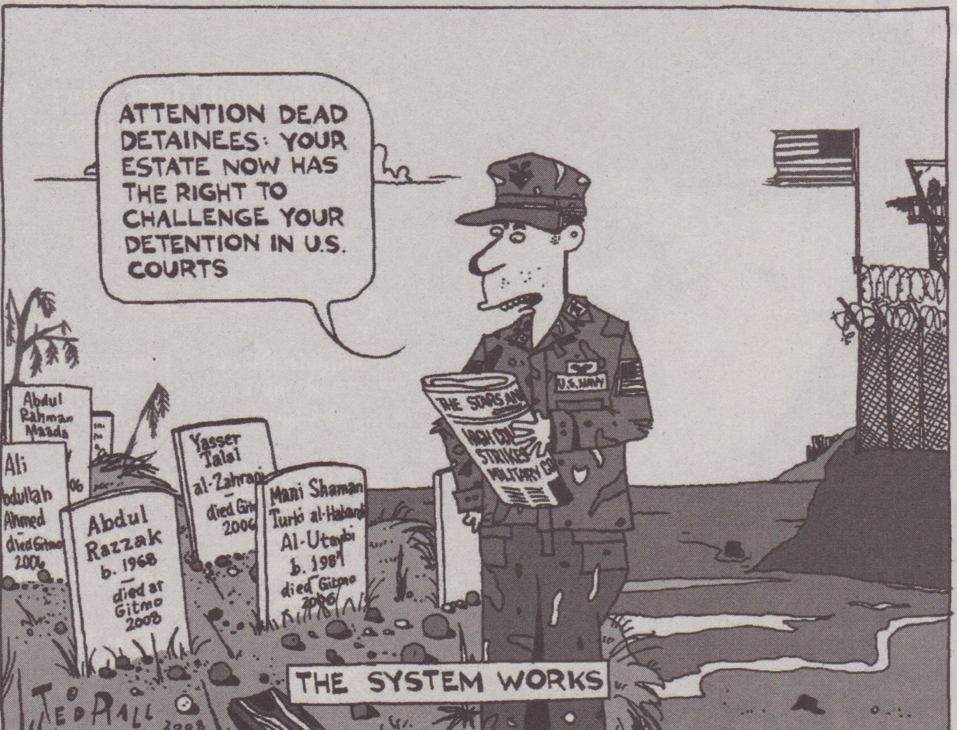
****

I feel a great need to promote the deluxe heavy-duty gatefold vinyl release of Skitkids *Besöket Vid Krubban*. This dream-come-true is brought to us by Room 101 Records (room101records@yahoo.com) in the US and Hate Records (www.haterecords.net) in Germany. I reviewed the CD of *Besöket Vid Krubban* in issue #298, but CDs suck so everyone (and I mean *everyone* dammit) should buy a copy of the LP. If you've never heard them, Skitkids plays manic, high-energy hardcore with relentlessly catchy riffs. The songs on this record will cause you to offer your sacred body parts to see them play live. Believe me, it's worth it. They are one of the best bands going!

***

Highlights of summer part one (in no order):

1.Hanging out with Hector, Ieri, and Marat from Barcelona while they made cinnamon rolls from scratch, and later enjoying a viewing of the Brazilian punk documentary *Botinada* with them.
2. Going to all the neighborhood eateries with Straightjacket Nation and their roadie Clint and subsequently bastardizing their Aussie lingo. They invaded our house for a week and it was fucking *siiikk*. They played endless amounts of ping-pong and dice, made many mixtapes, and green-taped an entire bin of 7"s. Oh, and they also treated the SF punks to an awesome live set at Balazo.
3. Meeting unearth-er of punk scenes worldwide, Luk Haas. It's been stated by all that had the pleasure of conversing with him that he's immensely inspirational. His involvement with punk is more political than words can say. Punk has never seemed more relevant when talking to him about discovering the subculture in China, Thailand, Cambodia, Tajikistan, Russia, etc. His next stop is the Congo although he doubts that punk exists there. Listen to the two radio sets that he recorded during his visit at www.maximumrocknroll.com/radio
4. Eating Indian pizza with Chris, Mélanie, and Panu from Helsinki on Mélanie's birthday. Sorry that American board games suck... Next time we can play ping-pong.
5. Playing extreme ping-pong with Chrissy Piper. We make up our own rules and we eat fresh donuts at midnight.
6. Graham and Heidi Booth are most likely relocating from LA to the Bay Area. It will be awesome to have them around for late night restaurant excursions. Hopefully we will get to regularly experience the obscure listening habits of DJ Booth and can frequently indulge Heidi about her Uno/pancake/interior design expertise.
7. Getting an entire rundown of the current Portland scene from Colin in one brief five-minute conversation at Balazo. I was bummed to hear that Sleepwalkers RIP broke up but he confirmed my need to see Social Graces. I wish I could've talked to him more, but I appreciated the in-depth Portland scene report. Next time put it to paper, pal!
8. Finishing my ninth issue of *MRR*. Holy fuck! It's been nine issues. I do feel a little crazy about the fact that I never leave the house except for other-work or the occasional show, but obviously I'm having fun. All is good so far...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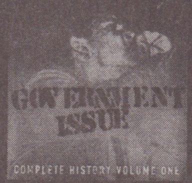
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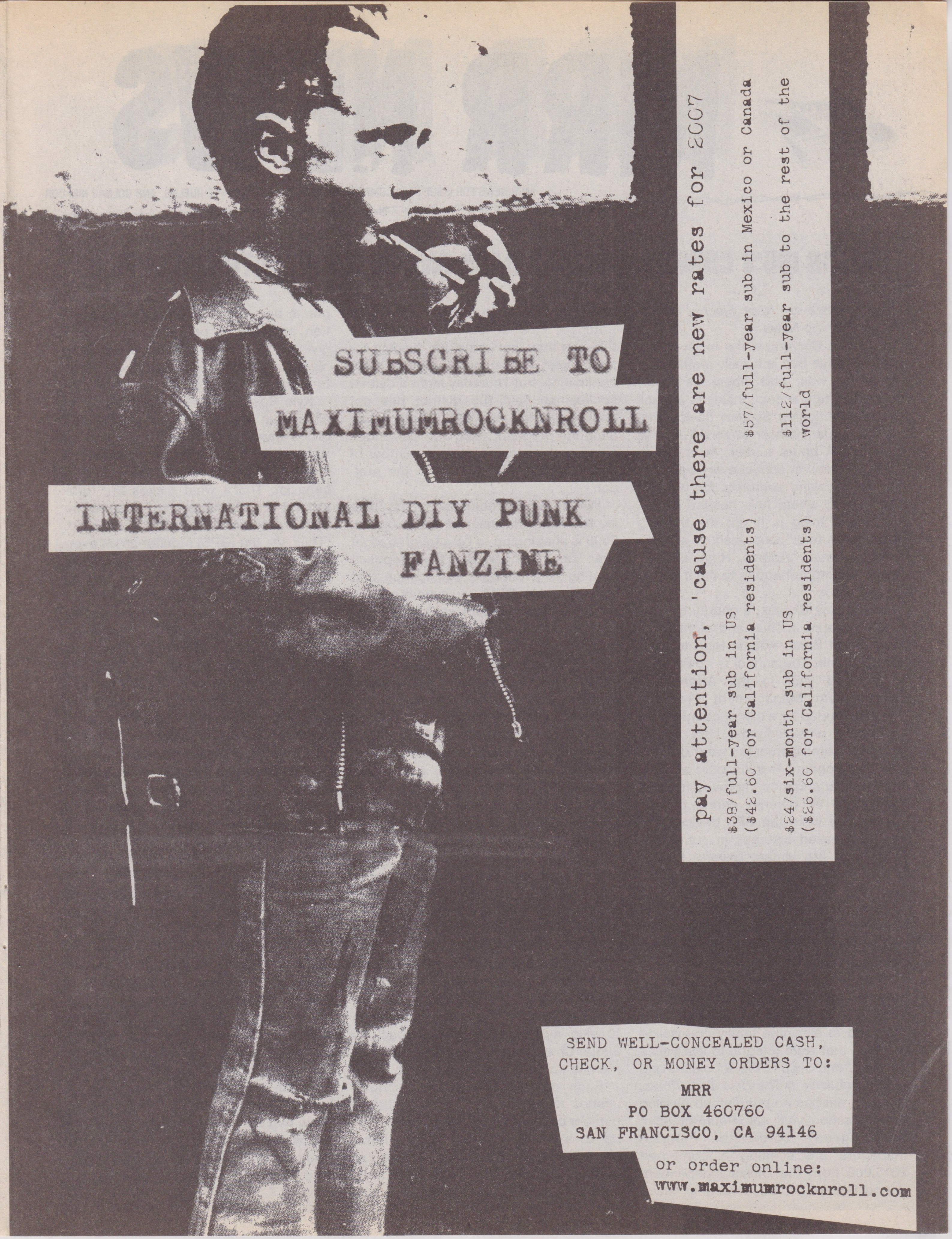

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MRR NEWS

MRR NEWS FOR ISSUE #303 COMPILED BY ARIEL CELESTE, YAPPLE RUELAS, AND GOLNAR NIKPOUR

DALLAS ISD'S CHRONIC TRUANTS BACK ON THE RADAR WITH GPS DEVICES

From a piece by Kent Fischer of the Dallas Morning News

For Joshua Cervantes, the black pouch clipped to his belt is a daily reminder of where he was, and where he's now headed in high school. Inside is a black Global Positioning System device that allows a truant officer to zero in on his location 24 hours a day. As a result, Joshua is now in school every day and, he said, thinking seriously, for the first time, about where he's headed in life. "The main thing is it got me thinking about my future," said Joshua, a freshman at Bryan Adams High School. "What's going to happen to me if I don't care?"

Judge Rey Chavez, a county truancy judge, ordered Joshua and eight other students at Bryan Adams High to wear the GPS unit. The school is completing its second year in the Attendance Improvement Management Program, which is funded by a mix of county, nonprofit and private funds. Last school year, 46 "chronic truants" were ordered into the program. Results were surprising: Their attendance improved from 84 percent to 97 percent during the six weeks they wore the GPS device. "We have witnessed changes in some students that are almost beyond belief," Bryan Adams principal Cynthia Goodsell wrote in a letter to the project's supporters. "What has amazed us is the number and type of students who responded so well to the program's intensive supervision and coaching."

Despite the promise, funding shortfalls required the project's managers to scale it back to only nine students this year and to eliminate family counseling services that were integral to last year's success. And despite the accolades and recent publicity in *The New York Times*, the program has no guaranteed funding for next school year, said Paul Pottinger, the program's co-director. Program managers are seeking a combined $615,000 from the Dallas Independent School District and Dallas County, which operates local truancy courts. Dr. Pottinger said school district officials told him they would include funding for the project in a pending federal grant application, but Thursday night a district spokesman said the district has not applied for the money. "We're still evaluating the program," said Jon Dahlander, citing cost concerns and the number of students currently enrolled in the project.

While county commissioners have expressed enthusiasm for the program, 2009 is shaping up to be a tough budget year. Dr. Pottinger said the proposed funding is a pittance considering that truancy costs DISD an estimated $10 million annually in lost state aid and that Dallas County spends an additional $6.5 million a year on truancy courts and related juvenile justice programs.

The project's use of GPS tracking devices is unusual but not unique. Last year, Maryland lawmakers proposed something similar for truants in Prince George's County, but the measure went nowhere. And this spring, a Midland, Texas, judge created a GPS-based monitoring program for 15 truants in his court. In Dallas, the program exists only in Judge Chavez's court and so far has touched just 55 students. Judge Chavez places teens into the program only after their truancy becomes so bad that they face the prospect of being sent to juvenile detention. The students selected for the program averaged 55 missed school days a year and were the bottom 1 percent of the approximately 9,000 students adjudicated by Dallas County Truancy Court last year. If the students continue to skip school, they end up back in Judge Chavez's court and face a misdemeanor contempt of court charge.

Each day upon arrival at school, Joshua is required to punch a three-number code into his GPS device to signal to a project monitor that he is on campus. He punches the code again at lunch, and a third time at his 9 p.m. curfew. The device also contains a cell phone programmed with voice recognition software to prevent Joshua from giving it to a friend to take to school in his place. "Basically, it makes me come to school," he said.

Kyle Ross, Bryan Adams' director of alternative education, spent the first half of his career working with convicts in federal prison, so he knows how difficult it is to get people to change ingrained behavior. That's what makes the turnaround in students like Joshua so remarkable—if it can be sustained. "They see the [GPS] monitor as an ever-watchful eye that they can't beat," Dr. Ross said. "And that solves the hardest problem we have: getting them here."

Years ago, the criminal justice system discovered that Global Positioning System devices are useful in tracking parolees and those under house arrest. GPS units proved to be an inexpensive and effective alternative to incarceration. Using the technology as a truancy deterrent has raised eyebrows. Debates on technology-related blogs and among civil libertarians center on whether GPS devices are too invasive for misdemeanor truants. Dr. Pottinger said GPS is a tame option compared to boot camps or ordering families into counseling programs. Those who work with the program's participants say the GPS devices are only one small piece of the project, and might not even be the most important part.

Dr. Pottinger, a former director of the Dallas Challenge Truancy Enforcement Center, says support from teachers is critical—things such as remedial tutoring, so-called "credit recovery" programs to help them graduate on time and social services to support families after truants leave the GPS program. "You can put a kid back into school, but most of these kids are smart enough to know that they can't just jump back into it after missing so many days," said Mrs. Goodsell, the principal. "You can't just drop them back into school and expect success."

CHRISTOPHER ALLEN JOHNSON – JUNE 8TH, 1976 TO JUNE 21ST, 2008

Christopher Allen Johnson was born in South Bend, Indiana on June 8th, 1976. He married the love of his life, his beautiful wife Michele Riordan on his birthday, June 8th, 2007. He is survived by his wife Michele, mother Wendy, father Kenny, sister Dawn, cousin Ryan, and his two nephews Christopher and Taylor.

Chris Johnson was one of two singers in the Minneapolis based thrash/hardcore band Useless Wooden Toys. He was also the lead vocalist in another Minneapolis based band called Loaded First/Bonner Head. Music and skating were his passions. When Useless Wooden Toys would tour, he and the boys would invade every skate park in the nation along the way. He loved to play thrash, and was a very proficient skater. Chris was a stand up guy who was always there for friends and family. He made many, many friends on the road and this is a devastating loss to all knew him, gigged with him, and partied with him.

Chris Johnson was murdered June 21st, 2008 for defending a female friend of his who was being groped by a random redneck named Brian P. White in Bloomington, Indiana. The murderer was caught by police two hours after the attack hiding in a cellar like a coward. Chris fought the attacker, Brian P. White, off of his friend, then White ran into the home where the house show / party was being held, grabbed a knife, and attacked Chris stabbing him in the chest.

Chris Johnson died for being a stand-up guy who was defending a female friend from being groped unwillingly by White. He will always be honored and remembered as the great friend, husband, brother, and skater that he was. Rest in peace, Bro. You will be missed and never forgotten.

—Yapple Ruelas

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HOMEOWNERS FIGHTING POLICE BRUTALITY ILLEGALLY ARRESTED

Press Release:
On the morning of Friday, June 13th, 2008, plainclothes detectives and a Ninth Precinct Police Captain entered a Ridge Avenue home without a warrant and arrested four Philadelphia community members—Daniel Moffat, Trevor Burgess, Andrea Okorley, and Jennifer Rock. These residents were pulled from their home at 1652 Ridge Avenue, arrested, and detained without charges at the Ninth Philadelphia police precinct for over twelve hours. Less than twenty four hours later, almost half a dozen other law enforcement agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security and the Housing Authority, had conducted a tour of the property, and the Department of Licensing and Inspections had closed and sealed the property.

While police claimed entry to the property under the pretext that it was an abandoned building, the residents of 1652 Ridge Avenue have owned and lived at the property for up to four years, while they worked on and improved their house. They have been active members of the Francisville neighborhood—partnering on community food distribution and community garden projects, among others.

On one of the hottest days of the year, these community members were locked into police cars, waiting to discover the nature of the criminal charges against them, as multiple officials searched their home. "They said it wasn't an arrest," says Mr. Moffat. "The police captain [Wilson] said he'd do me a favor, and put us in a cell because it was so hot outside. I asked, if we weren't being arrested, why we were being sent to be processed in jail? He smiled at me in a joking manner, and said, 'Call it a kidnapping.' That was my last word with Captain Wilson before later that night, when I was in jail." Moffat and his housemates were never charged with a crime.

The residents of 1652 Ridge Avenue learned that night, while in jail, that the Department of Licensing and Inspections had written up their home for multiple code violations, and that they would have only a few hours the next day to retrieve personal possessions, before the house was sealed to them and all other nonofficial entrants. When the residents returned to their home the next day, they found that personal papers, books, and computers had been rifled through or confiscated. Trevor Burgess, who returned to his room Saturday morning under police escorts, noted, "The only thing I really noticed they messed with was my photographs. All my photographs were just, like, torn through and all over my room. [The policeman] kept asking me about the photographs."

"When I was allowed to enter the building, to get stuff out, when I got to my room, my room had been thoroughly searched," said Moffat. "My computer was gone. I was informed that the Department of State had taken my computer for evidence. I couldn't find my phone list that was posted on the wall. I couldn't find a notepad with a bunch of my notes in it. I couldn't find this little book with a lot of phone numbers in it."

Residents stress that this incident happened just a week after they had begun circulating petitions about police surveillance cameras that had been installed in the neighborhood. Francisville, which abuts the newly affluent areas of Fairmount and Spring Garden, has seen a rise in police presence and in residents being asked for identification in their own neighborhood and in front of their homes. "It's clear to me that you don't have to be doing something wrong in order to be targeted by the police," said Andrea Okorley. "The fact that we were communicating with our neighbors about the presence of surveillance cameras was threatening enough."

These residents have called on press to not only hear their story, but to deepen coverage of increased police presence in the city, and the ways in which the city is driving out residents who have lived there for generations. "I want to go home," says Jennifer Rock. "But this is not an isolated incident. So many others are losing their homes or their freedom, and they can't be here to speak today."

RIAA DOUBLES SETTLEMENT COST FOR STUDENTS FIGHTING SUBPOENAS

From an article by Nate Anderson on Arstechnica.com

Challenging RIAA subpoenas can be costly, and not just because college kids have to dig deep into the sock drawer to pay lawyers of their own. Ars has learned that the RIAA's legal campaign against students is now built on escalating penalties; if you force the RIAA legal team into action, then end up settling, you could end up paying more than that initial $3,000. A *lot* more.

When college students are fingered by the RIAA's "pre-litigation letters," most schools pass the letters along and let students make their own decision about challenging the issue in court or settling for around $3,000. That's not cheap, but the RIAA has recently been making it far more expensive for students who try to fight. If a student doesn't respond to a pre-litigation letter and the RIAA has to go to court to get the name, the settlement fees goes up to about $4,000. And if a student decides to challenge the RIAA's subpoena or otherwise delay a trial, the price jumps dramatically to $7,000 or $8,000.

We spoke with a legal consultant for the RIAA who handles much of this litigation, and he explained that the music trade group has always seen legal challenges to its tactics. In the last year, though, RIAA lawyers have seen a serious uptick in the number of students who have attempted to quash subpoenas that would allow them to learn the students' identities. In some cases, this takes the form of filing a motion to quash, then waiting for the RIAA to file a counter-motion, then filling a motion to suppress the counter-motion, then waiting for the RIAA to respond, then... well, you get the idea.

When you're paying the RIAA's rates for legal help, this sort of thing costs serious money, and it leads to delay. Over the last six months, the RIAA has begun a concerted campaign to limit what it sees as frivolous litigation of this kind, as it says no defendant in the history of the RIAA enforcement campaign has successfully battled such a subpoena (although it should be pointed out that there are some motions to quash that are still pending).

In order to strike fear into the hearts of students everywhere, the RIAA has adopted a sort of anti-Wal-Mart model where it passes the costs on to you. In fact, the RIAA tells us that it is actually acting in everyone's best interests through this escalating costs approach. Because most students end up settling anyway, fighting the subpoenas generally just raises the amount of the fee they end up paying. It also costs them more in legal fees, it ties up the courts, and the whole process appears to bore RIAA lawyers to tears.

The legal consultant tells Ars that this has nothing to do with bullying people into staying silent and paying up. "We have no qualms with individuals exercising their rights to litigate real issues," he says. "[But] the issues being raised in these motions to quash are issues that have been resolved time and time again in the RIAA's favor."

Students sometimes think they can simply fight the subpoena and the case as hard as humanly possible, then simply drop it and settle down the line. The RIAA wants to get the word out, though: those choices have consequences that can be measured in beer money. Lots and lots of beer money.

We weren't surprised to find that the Electronic Frontier Foundation has a different perspective, but the gulf between the two sides is positively Grand Canyon-like in size. I spoke to EFF attorney Corynne McSherry, who argued that the copyright infringement claims at the basis of these lawsuits aren't always as strong as the RIAA would have people believe.

McSherry points to recent court decisions that cast doubt on the idea that simply making a file available is the same as actually distributing it to the public, and she points out that the MPAA has been wildly misguided in its own analysis of collegiate file-swapping. Given these issues and more recent questions about the limits of automated P2P enforcement, McSherry argues that it is "especially inappropriate and unfortunate" to punish people for trying to defend themselves in court. The "judicial process is important, and it's particularly important now when there seems to be real questions for the factual basis for these claims," she says.

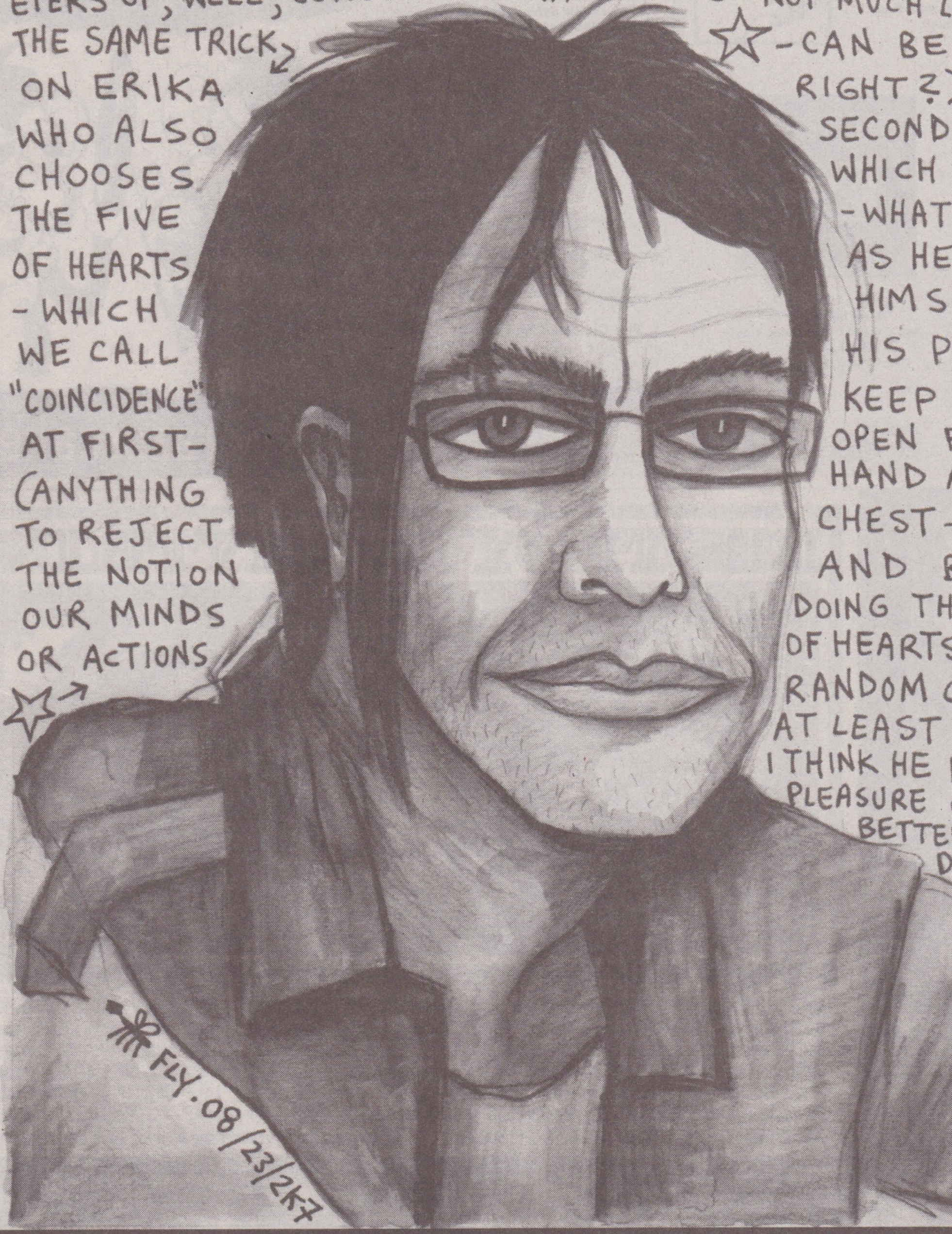
And taking a bigger-picture look at the entire issue, McSherry says that there's "no reason to believe that any of this is stopping file-sharing or helping the RIAA or the artists that it represents to get paid."

Colleges are simply "scapegoated because they're easy targets," she says, pointing out that schools do far more to educate their network users about copyright, fair use, and file-swapping than any commercial ISPs in the US. The schools are easier to pursue than individuals because they are uniquely vulnerable to government pressure (in the form of grants and aid money), while at the same time they possess unique punishment powers that commercial ISPs lack.

PEOPS

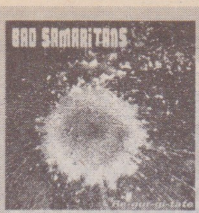
WE WERE UNLOADING THE VAN IN MISSOULA WHEN THIS STREET MAGICIAN COMES UP AND SAYS HE'D LIKE TO DO A TRICK OR TWO FOR US AND WHAT THEN HAPPENS DOES SO ON TWO LEVELS - WHAT GETS NOTICED IS BEING ASKED TO THINK OF A CARD - "FIVE OF HEARTS" - I INTERNALLY SAY TO MYSELF, HAVING READ THAT MEN OFTEN CHOOSE BLACK CARDS AND KINGS OR ACES - HE THEN PULLS OUT A PACK OF CARDS AND FANS THEM OUT TO SHOW THERE'S ONE UPSIDE-DOWN CARD - WHICH I TURN OVER TO SHOW IT IS IN FACT THE FIVE OF HEARTS - THIS IS OF COURSE AWESOME IN THE PROPER SENSE OF THE WORD - IE: SLIGHTLY SCAREY AND BEYOND THE USUAL PARAMETERS OF, WELL, CONSCIOUS AWARENESS - NOT MUCH LATER ON HE DOES THE SAME TRICK ↘ ON ERIKA WHO ALSO CHOOSES THE FIVE OF HEARTS - WHICH WE CALL "COINCIDENCE" AT FIRST - (ANYTHING TO REJECT THE NOTION OUR MINDS OR ACTIONS ☆→ ☆ - CAN BE CONTROLLED, RIGHT?) - BUT ON THE SECOND LEVEL - THAT WHICH SEEMS TRIVIAL - WHAT THIS CHAP DOES AS HE INTRODUCES HIMSELF AND DOES HIS PATTER - IS KEEP PATTING HIS OPEN FIVE FINGERED HAND AGAINST HIS CHEST - IE: HIS HEART AND BY MERELY DOING THAT THE FIVE OF HEARTS POPS UP AS THE RANDOM CARD TO PICK - AT LEAST THAT IS HOW I THINK HE DID IT - IS THE PLEASURE OF A MYSTERY BETTER THAN THAT OF DEMYSTIFICATION? (THINK ON)

- BY THE WAY - HIS NAME IS EVAN DISNEY



Dick Lucas - 08/23/2K7 - Knitting Factory NYC

I first met Dick in the early '90s at ABC No Rio - altho i had heard his music long before that - the Subhumans & Citizen Fish - but i never got to see them live or hang out with them until ABC No Rio!! - Dick is not only a great vocalist & writer, but he is also an amazing visual artist - i don't think i have to give much of a description to anyone who is reading this - you can find them on the internet - www.citizenfish.com - or look for Bluurg or the Subhumans - I always have a blast at Subhumans or Citizen Fish shows because my awesome pals Robert &/or Karoline are usually roadie-ing & also because all the old punks crawl out of the woodwork & also because Dick & the gang put on a fully rockin & relevant show!! - To contact Fly email: fly@bway.net - (put MRR in the subject so i know it's not spam!) snail-mail: Fly PO Box 1318 Cooper Stn NYC NY 10276 USA - Fly zines - PEOPs & Dog Dayz (#1 & 2) are available through microcosmpublishing.com - & stay tuned for a postcard collection & new PEOPs volume by Fly published by PM Press - www.pmpress.org (so exciting - i cannot sleep!)



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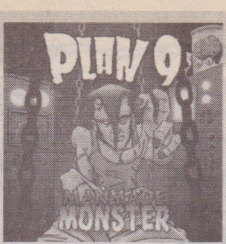

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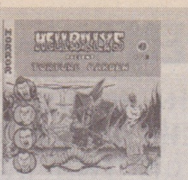

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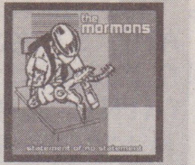

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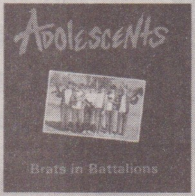

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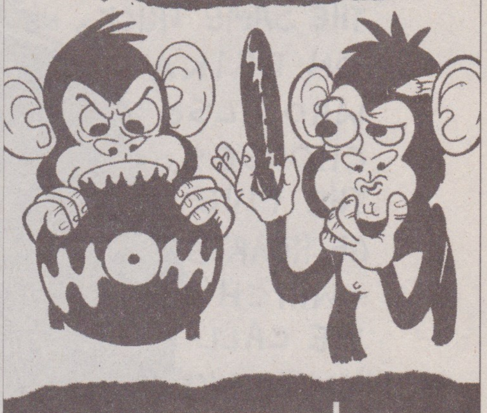

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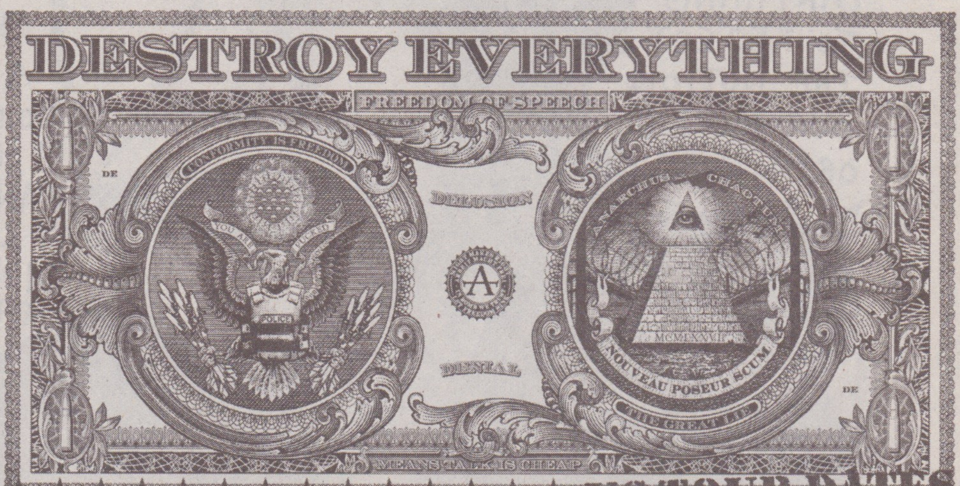

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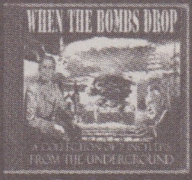

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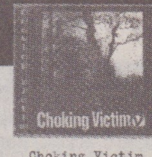

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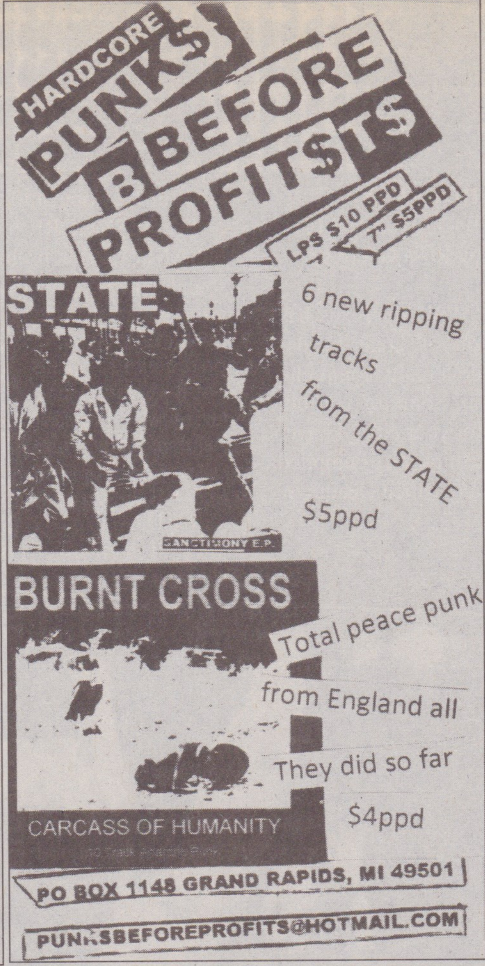

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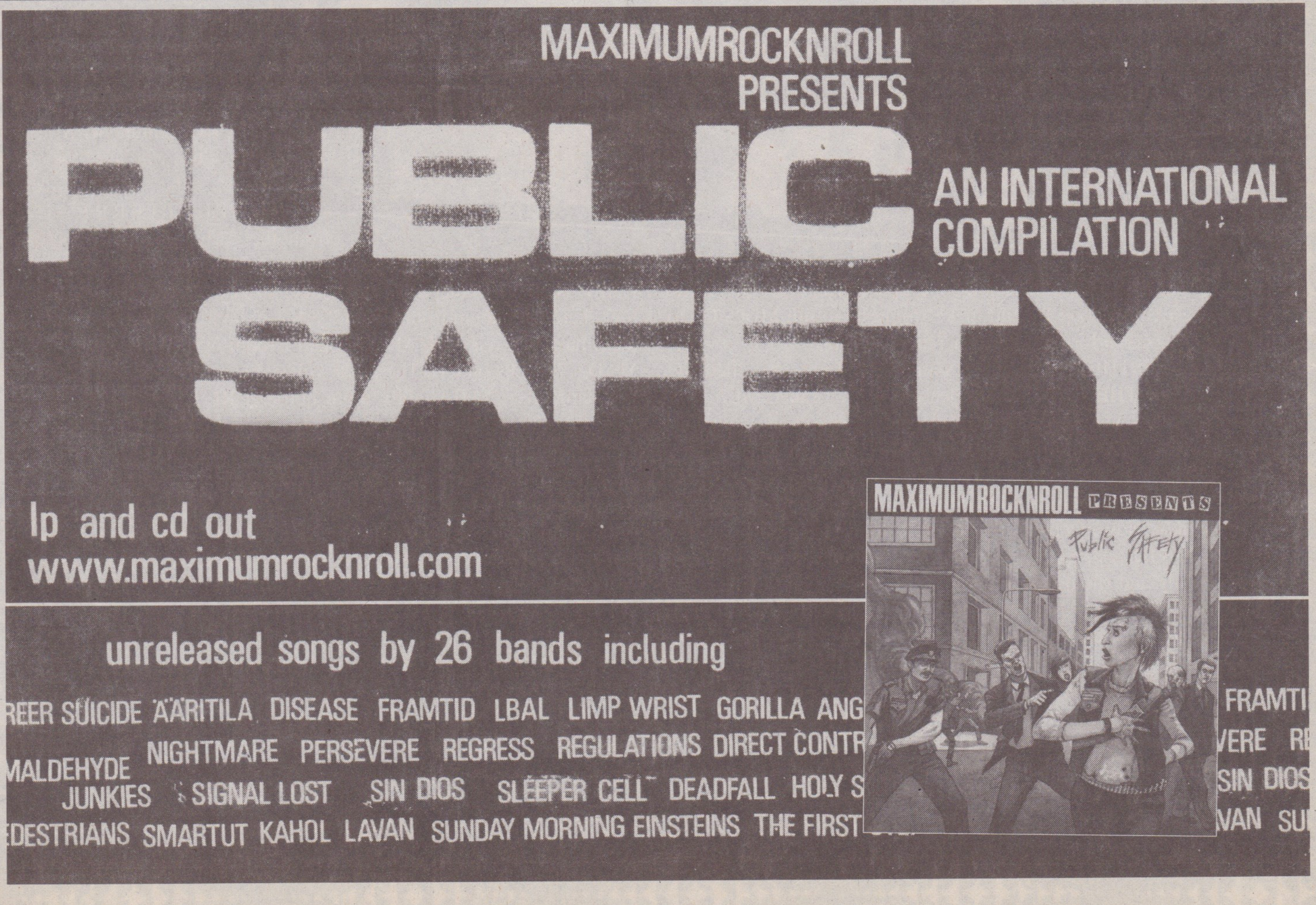

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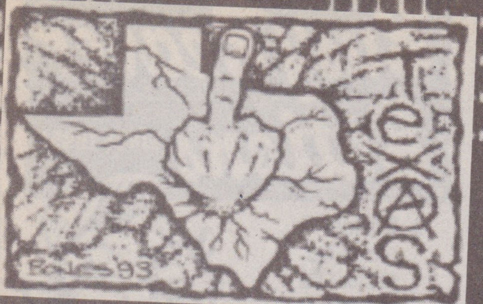
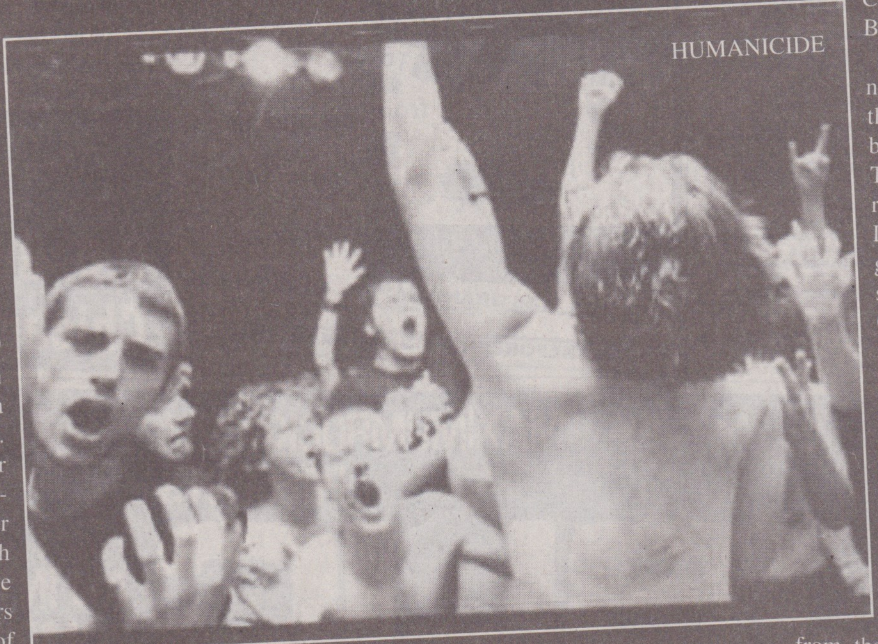


HOUSTON

By Jason Beck, Photos by Rosa Guerrero

While Texas has a ton of great bands, I don't know enough about the other scenes to do a really comprehensive Texas report so I'm focusing on Houston. Some of you other Texan punkers get up off your ass and do one for your city!. I haven't done a scene report for this mag in ages, but I think I've compiled a pretty comprehensive one (I do a radio show here called Deadthyme. More on that later).

First off, bands...


HUMANICIDE

THE HATES are still at it. They have been going since 1978, and unlike most other bands that first-era bands they never broke up or stopped playing, recording, or releasing their own records. As a matter of fact, they just came out with a brand new album called *30 Years of* Hate; which sounds like it would be a "best of" but it's not. These guys have never cared about trends promoting themselves, or trying to make it, which might be why they've been around for 30 years and no one's heard of them. The new CD is more of the same, fast, old school, honest punk with great bass lines. The closest comparison I could make would be to old MDC. Go to www.thehates.com for news, bio, merchandise, etc.

Speaking of THE HATES, there's a new band in town called NO TALK, (Note: THE HATES first release was a 7" called *No Talk* In the '80s) who is an homage to the Houston punk sound of old, including REALLY RED, LEGIONAIRES DISEASE, THE HATES, and others. Slower, bass-driven punk rock. They have one 7" out ("Police Mafia / A Houston Punk Is a Dead Punk") which is probably out of print already. However, they're playing a free record release show with SEX VID(!) at Sound Exchange record store (more on them later) in July and should have a new 7" by then. NO TALK is Beau from INSECT WARFARE, who unfortunately broke up, though they still have a couple of releases in the queue, Josh from REASON OF INSANITY, RACE AGAINST TIME, P.M.R.C., and a few more bands, and Tom from WEAK MINDS, who recently put out a 16 song 7" full of hostile powerviolence that's pretty damn good.

If you were ever into DEAD HORSE here is some good news: original members Greg (guitar) and Ronnie (drums) have formed a new band with Kurt Brecht of DRI, who has moved back to Houston, called JUNKER. They've been demo-ing material and are taking their time writing stuff, but should have something out soon.

EL DESMADRE has just put out a split 7" with REASON OF INSANITY. You probably know what REASON OF INSANITY sounds like by now. EL DESMADRE has a similar sound but a little more punky. Good hardcore from both bands. Psycho Wolf Records is promising the next *Gulf Coast Massacre* compilation is coming out soon. That should feature a lot of local bands plus other Gulf Coast ones.

Tough guy hardcore bands WILL TO LIVE and PRIDE KILLS have both broken up, doing their last show a month ago. FIGHT PRETTY used to be something of a grind/fastcore band, but on their new CD, *Rewiring the Human Body*, they are a bit more along the lines of stuff like THE LOCUST and CREAM ABDUL BABAR.

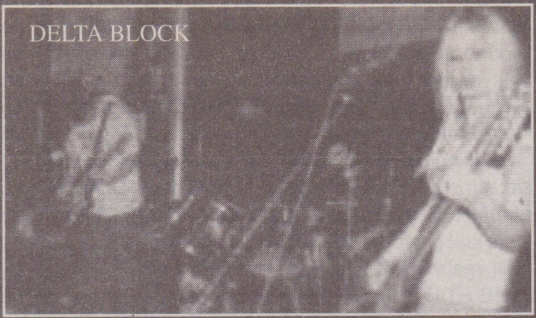
DISSENT is a newer, grind crust band, think RUIDO, that has been playing around a lot. They have a couple of releases out. PRETTY LITTLE FLOWER is still going strong, releasing stuff at geometric rates. Chances are if you're into grindcore, you've heard them. Their new stuff has a bit more of a thrashy element added to the grind.

HYPO CHRISTIANS features two of the guys who used to be in the infamous SPLATTERREAH from the early '90s. They play some anti-religious grind/deathcore, and have two 7"s. BARK HARD is back together and writing new material. Their classic skate rock, hardcore album from the mid '80s (out on Zorlac Records back then) has been reissued. Also reissued is both of STARK RAVING MAD's 12" EPs on CD. These guys played some awesome original, fast hardcore, a la a slightly more quirky DRI. Unfortunately, the label that put out the reissue is based in the UK, so it's an import. Now if someone would reissue S.N.O.T.'s classic *Slaughterhouse* 7", we'd have most of Houston's best old hardcore bands available again. Also reissued is all the material THE MYDOLLS ever released, and some unreleased, on a double CD from Grand Theft Audio. Early punk, post punk, and art punk type stuff from these girls and guy. Last year was a celebration of it being 20 years since the '80s punk club The Axiom opened. A lot of the old bands came back and played again.

RATS IN THE ATTIC makes me think a bit of BEHIND ENEMY LINES, and has been playing around a lot. They have a CD out, as does THE DELTA BLOCK. They play a form of arty punk, something like a less funky, more punk MINUTEMEN. Their CD does not capture their sound very well—they are much stronger and better live.

ROOM 101 is a one man band that reminds me of a cross between

BIG BLACK and THE CRUCIFUCKS, or if you want a modern reference, a more punk CLOCKCLEANER. They have a CD out as well. THE BEGINNING OF THE END is another thrash/grind band with monster movie themes. They have a couple of 7"s and a 10" released. 50/50 has a 7" out, but it's not that representative of their sound. The EP is straightforward grind, but they sound more powe violence-ish every time I've seen them. I think they may have a different vocalist now. Several older bands such as the edge-of-punk VATOS LOCOS and pop-punk 30FOOTFALL are still playing around a bit, but I don't know if either is still recording or releasing material. There are a lot of newer bands that I don't know much about or haven't gotten to check out yet such as RIOT UP FRONT, SNOT NOSED TERRORS, THE ALE GORE, BRUTALLY NORMAL, COP WARMTH, MOLOTOV COMPROMISE, or CHOCOLATE CRUCIFIX. All I can say is send me your stuff to play on my radio show, and if I do another scene report I'll know more about you and can say more. Most of these bands can be found online at their respective websites or on the M-word site.


DELTA BLOCK

Now for Shows:

There are a lot of places to play and go to for more established punk type bands, such as Fitzgerald, which has been around since the '70s, Walter's On Washington, The Engine Room, and, for better-known bands, The Meridian. For smaller bands you have to dig deeper. I would suggest The White Swan, Dead Baby Distro, Notsuoh, and The Proletariat. All these clubs have websites. Also you can contact Hate Tank Productions online. They book shows here and could probably at least point you in the right direction if you are a band wanting to play Houston.

Record Stores:

There are two music stores worth mentioning. They both have a lot of records, including tons of used ones, and sell lots of punk and hardcore as well as metal and most all other forms of music featured in this magazine. Vinyl Edge is located on the north side of town by FM 1960, and has more records and is a little bigger than the other good store, Sound Exchange, which is on Richmond Ave right in the middle of Houston. Sound Exchange has a little more metal and extreme hardcore records. Beau (INSECT WARFARE, NO TALK, etc.) works there and Kevin, the artist for the above-mentioned SLAUGHTERHOUSE 7" and DRI's *Dealing With It* and *Violent Pacification* records, is a co-owner. Vinyl Edge has a bit more experimental noise, doom, and punk CDs, and is owned by Chuck Roast, who used to do the Funhouse radio show on KPFT in the '80s and early '90s. You can visit their website at: www.vinaledge.com.

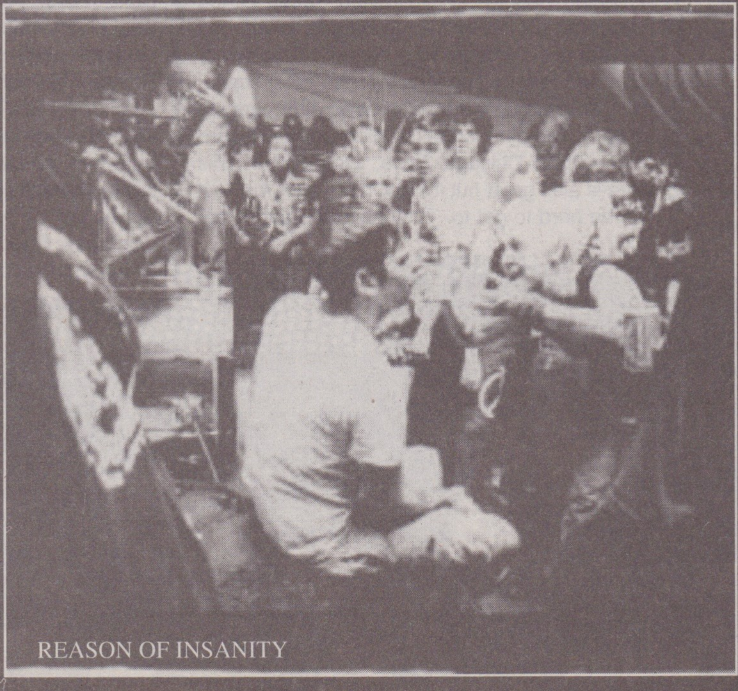
Radio Shows:

Speaking of radio, there are several radio shows in Houston worth *MRR* readers' interest. Ejacula is more metal-oriented, though they do play a bit of hardcore and grindcore, and comes on from 2 till 5 AM Friday mornings on KPFT 90.1 FM.

The Mutant Hardcore Flower Hour has been around since the '80s, and plays more classic punk and edge-of-punk stuff, garage rock, post punk, and a little hardcore. It comes on Thursday nights from 10 PM till 1 AM on KTRU 91.7 FM.

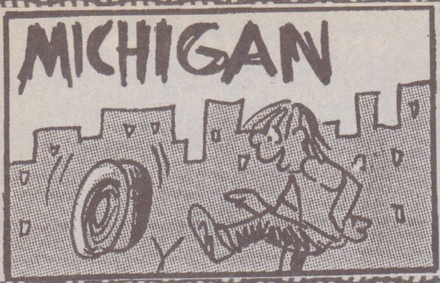
The Genetic Memory Show features avant garde, industrial noise, sound collage, dark ambient, art punk, power electronics, and other experimental forms of music. It comes on Monday nights from 10 PM till 1 AM on KTRU 91.7 FM. One of the DJs used to do the above-mentioned Funhouse show with Chuck. You can find DJ info, current spin lists, and more at their website: www.vinaledge.com/geneticmemory. As far as I know, the other radio shows don't have personal websites, although they do have my-you-know-whats.

Lastly, I do the deadthyme radio show. It comes on from 3 till 5 AM, Monday morning on KPFT 90.1 FM. You can also download old episodes at: deadthyme.libsyn.com. The format is a mix of punk, industrial, death rock, hardcore, industrial noise, grindcore, crust, Oi!, D-beat, noisecore, gothic metal, powerviolence, straight edge, horror punk, experimental, and other weird, dark, and extreme stuff that falls through the cracks. I play an entire classic (over 15 years old) EP on the third week of every month, and you can find every playlist, a listt of every classic EP I've played, a list of every song I've played, alphabetized by band, or contact me, at the website: deadthyme.thezombified.com. Send any music you'd like played on the show to me at: PO Box 2584, Conroe, TX 77305.


REASON OF INSANITY

Etc:

And as a footnote, for those of you into nostalgia, you can check out the Houston Punk Archives here: www.houstonpunkarchives.com. They talk about old bands, have some songs available for download, and have old pictures and flyers up, as well as some old Funhouse shows you can download and similar items.



GRAND RAPIDS

Every time you read about Michigan you read about the Eastside, Detroit, Ann Arbor, and so on. Well, I am here to report that we do a have a West part to the state that has a great hardcore and punk scene with lots of new bands popping up all the time, and tons of kids getting into stuff. Grand Rapids is the one place in West Michigan that really has a lot of things going—bands, new records, shops, and venues. You may have just heard about all the Christian punks and how we have the most churches per capita in the country. Well I guess those are good things to start a ripping punk scene in reaction to. Let's get started with the bands. I will first mention some new bands that just formed or are about to play their first show. PROTOCULTURE is a crusty band that sounds a lot like early NAUSEA. The vocals are in your face, tough and sung by a female. They just played their first show and it was a great start. I am sure a demo will be out by the time you read this. SHATTERED BADGE is a band with a couple people from FUCK THIS. This is total INFEST-style hardcore. PREGNANT NUNS plays in a rocking punk style with a hardcore edge—think bands like CIRCLE JERKS for this new group. THE AMOEBA'S are a recently formed rock 'n' roll punk band. They have a first show coming up and have been practicing for months, so I expect them to move fast. FINAL WORD is a new band with people from FOREVER YOUTH. Just the basic, in your face, NYC-style hardcore punk you would expect from them. THE REAL BITTERS are a punk band with some older dudes. They sound very much like D.O.A. They have a demo out and are always playing shows. ATTENTION SPAN is a great crusty punk/hardcore band. They just recorded some songs and have a tour planned with another local band, POSITIVE NOISE. POSITIVE NOISE plays hardcore with some YOUTH OF TODAY/LARM and HERSEY sound. A split 7" with CRUCIAL SECTION will be out by the time you read this, along with a 7" called *No Hardcore*. JESUS CRISIS is a dual-vocal hardcore band. They rip with their original sounding hardcore punk. S/M is a new band with a strong VOID influence with some BORN AGAINST thrown into the vocals. FUCK THIS has just played a last show but who knows if that will really be it or not. They did a split 7" with THE STATE awhile back. *MRR* said they are so bad they devalued THE STATE'S legacy…so you have to check them out. RELIGIOUS SS DISORDER plays basic HC punk and they just finished a tour with ANTI YOU from Italy. They are working on a 7" that will be out by the time this prints. I would expect to see more touring from them in the future. And finally, there are THE HOMBRINUS DUDES. They are a two-piece hardcore grind band. One of them moved away, but to us they are still local. They have a full-length LP and a split LP with MERKIT on Punks Before Profits. They also released a 7" and a split 7" with LOADED FOR BEAR. Some of these are out of print and others you can still get. They are one of the best bands to ever come from Grand Rapids. The band BORN WITHOUT A FACE is an older Grand Rapids band. Punks Before Profits Records is working on repressing of all their material, which will be out later this summer. They play awesome in your face hardcore, but were way ahead of there time. They mixed that classic early-'80s sound with metal crossover crust in 1982! Most of the bands I mentioned were included on a comp called *Fuck Detroit This Is Grand Rapids.* Eight bands that all got together and recorded one song each at the same house. You can contact Punks Before Profits for this record.

RECORDS STORES:

We have two really cool record stores. There is Vertigo Records (129 Division Street, Grand Rapids) in downtown Grand Rapids, which has a pretty good amount of punk rock. The owner rules and is very supportive of the local scene. You can always find tons of used stuff popping up here. The other store is called Corner Record Shop (3562 Chicago Drive, Grandville). This store is also great but it's out in the suburbs so it can be hard to get to. They have a great selection of used and new records. They also sell used record players and fix them. It's a great store keeping vinyl alive.

VENUES/BOOKING SHOWS:

For booking shows in Grand Rapids contact any of the bands above. The scene is small and close so everybody will often chip in to help with a show. If you just get in touch and trade tapes or something they will help you out. We have a collective space called The DAAC and they have shows all the time. You can check them out at www.thedaac.org. This is a great venue and has been doing shows for over four years. We are very lucky to have this kind place, and I would be more then happy to direct you to people who book there (punksbeforeprofits@hotmail.com).

PLACES TO EAT:

Well I am vegan so I am just going to list the couple local places we have. Gia Café is an all veggie place, but does not have a lot of good stuff for vegans. Some think it is good but I don't like it that much. Marie Catribs (1001 Lake Drive, Grand Rapids; 7am-8pm Monday-Friday, Saturday 7-4pm, closed Sundays) is a great place for vegans and non-vegans. They have some good sandwiches and other eats. The prices are high but they are all-local and pay the employee's very, *very* well.

ZINES/RECORD LABELS:

Punks Before Profits Records has done almost 40 records. They were based out of NY but moved to Grand Rapids about two years ago. Look for new records by many of the bands listed above by the time this gets printed such as the *Fuck Detriot This Is Grand Rapids* 7" comp with eight of the bands listed above. This label also does the zine *Slash and Burn*, which covers hardcore punk. Get in touch: PO Box 1148, Grand Rapids, MI 49501; www.myspace.com/punksbeforeprofits, punksbeforeprofits@hotmail.com. On the Warpath Records is another cool record label done by Joe from FOREVER YOUTH and FINAL WORD. They did a HOMBRINUS DUDES 7" and a couple local hip-hop records, www.myspace.com/onthewarpathrecords. *Mix Tapes Do It Better* is a local zine focused on mix tapes. Check it out for a cool read—a zine all about mix tapes and punk.

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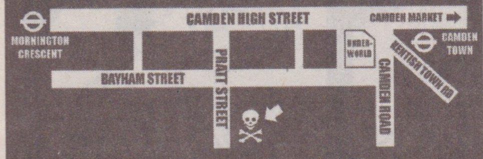
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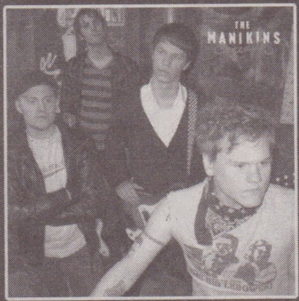
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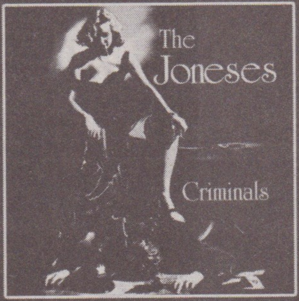
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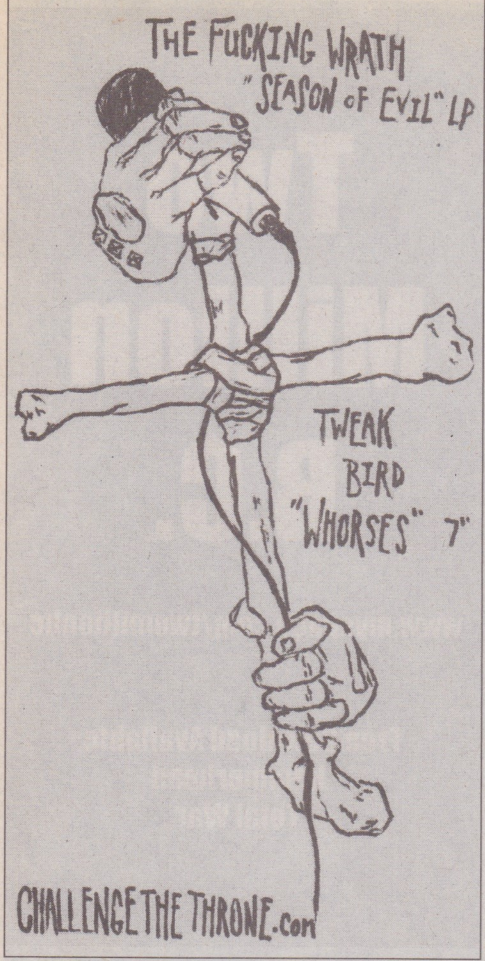
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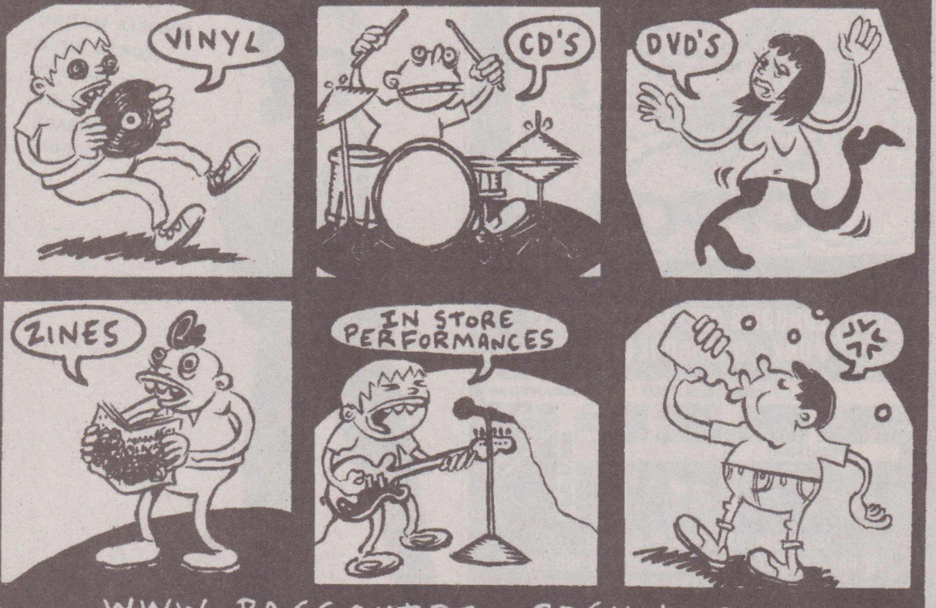
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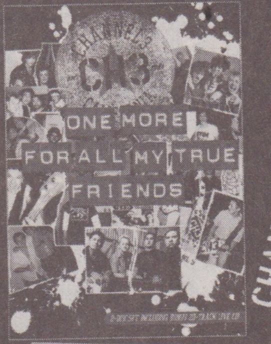
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NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR

Interview and photos
by Filip Majchrzakowski

MRR: A decade ago, it would have been really hard for me to think of any punk band from Denmark, besides maybe President Fetch, who as far as I know are more in the rock scene now. Then we had this boom with all these great bands—Paragraf 119, Uro, No Hope For The Kids, Young Wasteners, Gorilla Angreb. Why did this happen?

CORMY: I suppose, as an outsider who moved to the city, I see this has a lot to do with the mid-to-late-'90s rejuvenation of Ungdomshuset and the opportunities for rehearsal, concerts, and meeting people to form bands. Like you, I'd first heard of Copenhagen/Denmark through bands like Amdi Petersen's Arme, Asebia, Gorilla Angreb, and Uro, followed by the current/last crop of bands that sprung up just before I moved to the city. Coming from a place with a very insular punk scene (Dublin-Ireland) whose bands rarely travel and are generally ignored by the rest of the world, I did notice a difference with the bands from Copenhagen. Bands in Copenhagen practice a lot more, they're more conscious of their sound and how they develop it, and they listen to, criticize, and admire (and talk shit and insult) each other's bands in a half-serious half-joking way that seems to make people more conscious of and ambitious with their bands. Most importantly, there are much better rehearsal facilities there, and much cheaper too, which was something that Ungdomshuset provided that other places don't.

MRR: You were playing in some of those bands—can you tell us shortly about origins of Nuclear Death Terror?

CHRISTINA: Me and Adam used to be in Uro together, and I also used to play guitar in Aktiv Dödshjælp. We were both pretty bummed about not being able to continue with Uro after our singer decided to move to Germany to go to art school, so we decided to start something new together with our drummer at the time, Jeppe. After a few name and lineup changes, we ended up in the basement of Ungdomshuset one night, pulling the name Nuclear Death Terror out of a hat! Yes, we pulled it out of a moldy old hat, but just be glad we didn't choose the name "Nuclear Fire Legion" or "Apocalyptic Napalm Insanity"!! Ha ha! That's the story I guess…

MRR: Nuclear Death Terror, Skarpretter, and Paragraf 119 were touring across Europe, while other bands mentioned before seemed to focus more on the US and played a lot there, ignoring the European scene. Why is that?

CORMY: The other bands had a lot more hype across the Atlantic; people went fuckin' crazy for them (because they were fuckin' great; if you miss those others, check out Hjertestop, Virgin Suicide, Death Token, Ripping Headache). As well, the members of bands you've mentioned have strong roots in the European scene from organizing gigs and festivals in Copenhagen, and in return a lot of people have been keen to return the favor and get us to their countries.

CHRISTINA: Well, I wouldn't say that the aforementioned bands don't care about the European scene or never toured there, 'cause they did tour Europe a lot more than the States and are all really active in doing so—many bands just seem to focus on the Western part of Europe, doing the "easy" tours around Germany, Holland, France, etc. and not spending that much time trying to go places where we don't traditionally have a lot of contacts. As much as I love playing a packed gig in Köpi (Berlin) to a wild crowd of crusty punks and have many wonderful friends in Western Europe that I love to go visit, I think it's much more revitalizing to drive for 20 hours through mountains on bumpy roads where not many band busses have gone, to play a gig to 50 kids in Eastern Poland! Am I a masochist?? Some might think so after that statement, but it really means so fucking much to me to know that you're actually part of making a difference in peoples' lives. The punk scene in Western Europe is one big all-you-can-eat buffet offering the best bands around, touring bands from all over the world, the most amazing squats/houses and radical political activists all around, but we better not cheat ourselves. Most of the bands singing their songs about oppression, racism, cops, totalitarian regimes, etc. never actually bothered to break out of their "safe zone" and face the realities eye to eye. I mean, it's not a dangerous thing to be a punk in Denmark. Yes, you run into the occasional beating by stupid assholes in the nightlife and shit like that, but my point being—it's not illegal to be an anarchist or political activist. It's not impossible to demonstrate your anger on the streets or life threatening to spike your hair and walk down to the fucking supermarket on your own. The reality of life looks a lot different in a lot of the Eastern countries for example. In Ukraine, they can in many cities only advertise gigs on a word of mouth basis or by SMS, because if they put up posters or talk too loudly about it, the Nazis or the cops will come and wreck the party. Up until only about two or three years ago in Hungary, there would be no division between antifascist punks and Nazi skinheads. In Russia, the fascists kill the antifascists and the punks. In Belarus, they suffer the same repression from cops and Nazis, and the stories are many. I think it's very important, and also a bit "healthy" for us to go and visit some of these places and support their scenes to grow strong against the powers that try to shut them up. After all, isn't that also what punk is about? For me it is.

MRR: While all the "hype" bands go back to the '70s/'80s sound, you stick to this European crust sound, with black and white covers and lyrics about war. Aren't you bored with that?

Cormy: Bored with raw punk and crust? Ha ha, no. I'm into almost every genre of punk, hardcore, and metal, but no matter what I'm more or less excited about at any given time, there's nothing that gets me quite so hot and bothered as an out-of-control, thrashing, soul-devouring D-beat! Our lyrics are about more than just war—drug addiction, conformity, insidious urbanization and gentrification, sexual abuse, police control, etc.

Christina: I completely agree with Cormy! I'd definitely get bored shitless if it was all I ever listened to, and on top of that, there are so many generic and boring D-beat bands out there. But we all listen to many different genres and let ourselves be inspired by many different things. All of our songs aren't about war, but in these times taking up an issue like that is as relevant as ever. It might look like history is repeating itself with so many of the bands we're inspired by from the '80s, singin' the same songs about war, but back then it felt very relevant to bring up these issues, and it still does. It's just a different war now. Black and white covers?—I just love that shit! I've always been a sucker for xeroxed images distorted out of proportion and pen-and-ink illustrations! It never seems to grow old on me and I still discover new and amazingly talented punk artists within our scene!

MRR: Knowing where you are from we will have to talk about Ungdomshuset. This place was so famous that most of the people reading this should know about it, but for those who don't, can you give us short story of the place?

Christina: Ungdomshuset ("The Youth House") was "given" to the squatter movement after negotiations with the city council about getting a house for the youth of Copenhagen. Back in '82, there was a very big, powerful squatter scene and the mayor of the city saw it as the only way of putting an end to the squatting. Before he died, he said that it was the biggest mistake he did in his entire career!! The house was an all-volunteer activist-run activity house for left-wing radicals in Denmark, run with a flat-as-possible basic democratic structure. We had concerts, theatre performances, political meetings, a book/info café, a vegan soup kitchen, a screen-print workshop, rehearsal rooms for bands, a gym/martial arts group, and a lot of other activities in the house. When you think in the traditional sense of autonomous, self-governed activity spaces, you probably think mostly about anarchism, political activism, and punk rock, but Ungdomshuset was a lot more than that because of the long history of the house. We were, and especially in the last few critical years, representing a very broad counterculture and housing a ton of different activities, from being the base of the punk rock DIY community in Copenhagen to housing jugglers and circus artists from the alternative arts scene.

MRR: The eviction was really brutal and many people faced severe charges—some of you were among them. What is the situation now with those individuals?

Christina: On March 1st, 2007 the Anti-Terror Corps and the cops evicted Ungdomshuset at 7:00 in the morning with assistance from the military. They shot shock grenades onto the roof (we had a flat roof) to put the people up there out of the game, and then proceeded downwards into the house at the same time as going through the window of the pirate radio station on the 4th floor to prevent us from using it to broadcast an eviction alarm (we did that through mobile phones anyway…suckers!). Then they started gassing their way through the house, ending up in the basement. After 50 minutes, the house had been evicted and everyone was arrested and put in strips on the floor of the small concert room for about an hour or two. While we were sitting there waiting to be taken to the police station, we could hear the people outside, police sirens, and dogs barking. It was quite an intense moment. What happened inside the house for those 50 minutes, we cannot really talk about as we are still awaiting trial. There were 30 people arrested inside the house, 15 of them being foreigners (from Sweden, Germany, USA, Poland, Hungary, etc). The foreigners were deported and subsequently released in their own countries after a couple of days and the Danish people were held in custody for three months. Actually, a bunch of the people from inside the house came back to Copenhagen to take part in the following protests. That must have been a weird feeling.

MRR: Do you have any plans to get new building?

CHRISTINA: Yes, and I believe we will get it. Some months before the eviction, we started having meetings with the politicians (all parties to the left, starting from the Social Democrats) about finding a solution for the house, either ending up in an agreement that we could stay or a new building given to us as a replacement for the old one. We only had a few demands, one of them saying that we would not under any circumstances pay for the building. The Social Democrats didn't want to talk to us back then, and without them we couldn't get the majority of the votes in the city council, which we needed. After the eviction, almost nobody wanted to talk to us (except for two parties on the far left), but after they realized that we were not going to just die by ourselves, that we kept getting stronger and that we insisted on claiming a new house, they agreed to take up negotiations after a big squatting action with 8,000 people in October. We are, since then, negotiating with the politicians and have made it as far as them making a decision that we should get a new building and that they will work actively to get that. Right now, we are discussing two buildings (put together they equal the same size as Ungdomshuset) and an outside area in the northwestern part of Nørrebro, approximately two kilometers from where Ungdomshuset used to be. There's a bit of a cold war going on between us now concerning matters like putting up a deposit. They say that we have to pay 600,000 kr (about $120,000). We say that we look forward to the next city election, ha ha. My bet is that they don't want to make any more mistakes with us again—the last mistake cost them 72 million kr (almost 15 million dollars)!! They could have given us the house for 2.6 million kr. I'd feel kinda stupid if I were a politician.

MRR: Since Ungdomshuset was active in the city for so many years, I wonder what the reaction of ordinary people was like to the eviction and all the actions/riots in the city? Were they supportive or rather fed up with riots? You told me also that this "Support Undgomshuset" thing became really fashionable—people bought t-shirts and pins without really getting into what is it all about.

CORMY: One thing I've noticed when I've been back in Copenhagen since the Ungdomshuset riots is how the atmosphere in Nørrebro (where most of the punks live) has changed; over the past five years there's been ever-increasing gentrification of the area going on. It's traditionally a very working class and immigrant neighborhood, but the yuppies have been steadily creeping. Whereas before the riots, these yuppies just ignored us, were bemused by us, or didn't really notice us, they now hate and fear us. I often witness scowls and sneers from these people, and to be honest, I fucking love it—haha, die yuppie scum!

CHRISTINA: Well, I'd only agree with Cormy to a certain extent… Definitely, there has been a huge hype about Ungdomshuset with everyone having an opinion about it. You won't find anyone in Denmark today that doesn't know of Ungdomshuset! During the time before the eviction, we experienced a huge increase of support locally, nationally, and internation-

Shitlickers

ally. It's a very important factor to keep in mind when you discuss the struggle for Ungdomshuset—that the house existed for 25 years and a lot of people have come through the house throughout the years. In our research for the campaign, we found that almost every venue, theatre, culture centre, media company, and newspaper had someone directly sprung out of the Ungdomshuset environment working there. And without the "playground" that Ungdomshuset was, they would never have gotten the job they have today. We found a sea of artists and media personalities that all supported Ungdomshuset (and still do), and were willing to talk about why it was such an important place for innovation and development in the creative environments. A bunch of (now) high-profiled bands played benefit shows to finance the campaign and to create awareness about the situation. We had actors, artists, musicians, and others to support us—all the local venues issued support statements, youth organizations made support statements, political parties put us into their election campaigns, and we generally experienced that a lot of people crawled out from whatever rock they were hiding under since they stopped coming in Ungdomshuset. Bottom line, an enormous amount of people have used Ungdomshuset throughout the 24 years it existed, and you can hardly visit a venue, theatre, music company, or art gallery without meeting someone that has at some point in their life had Ungdomshuset influence them. This makes our situation so much different from many other squats. We had massive support from the locals in our area and when the house got evicted a lot of them also took the streets alongside with us. One of the demonstrations shortly after the eviction gathered 15,000 people! I think even we were pretty amazed about just how many people continue to support us. It's gone from being an issue that only the punks and radical left activists care about into an issue that also involves a lot of other people and scenes. Denmark is going though a massive gentrification process and this affects a lot of people. I think what made the difference for us was that in this whole process, Ungdomshuset was one of the first to say "Stop, we won't have it!" and actually take up the fight with the authorities that force this normalization through. We became the vent that a lot of people needed, and for many, the struggle for Ungdomshuset is just as much a struggle against normalization in general. My bet is that one-quarter of all the people coming to our demonstrations these days had not even set their foot in the house when it was still there. But our scene managed to set that spark inside of them on fire!

MRR: There are also some bad things happening to Christiania lately?

Cormy: It's been a process that's going on for about four years, based on the policies of the current neo-liberal government, the Dansk Folkeparti. Everything outside of the boundaries of conformist, capital-based growth and expansion is being eroded; places like Christiania and Ungdomshuset, things that made/make Denmark one of the most free places in the Western world, are being systematically dismantled, and once these things are gone, they will never return. It was a process of centuries to get to the stage in the mid/late 20th Century which allowed for such places to come into being, and now as conservative/neo-lib control gains further and further ground in every aspect of life, anything outside the socio-cultural matrix of profit and control becomes a target. It's hard to say what will become of Christiania, but I suspect it will be similar to how governments in Germany, the Netherlands, and so on dealt with squatting in the '80s and '90s: co-opt and legalize certain places, sell them to the occupiers for cheap, and thus de-legitimize those who wish to continue squatting rather than climb in bed with the developers. Highly effective and successful divide-and-rule stratagem.

Christina: A few years back the politicians in government made a plan to "normalize" Christiania and they are really working on it. There used to be free-hash sales in Christiania—a market controlled by the people out there making it possible to have a hard-drug-free environment where you could go and buy your hash or pot. Now, the cops are patrolling in Christiania 24-7 and strike down hard on dealers. As a result, the hash market is now all over the city, in dodgy basements where you are likely to be offered a bit of coke at the same time as buying your hash. A part of the "normalization" process, is also tearing down a bunch of old and new home-built houses that don't fit into the standards of regular houses. These are really beautiful houses that people live in and of course this process pisses off a lot of people. Recently, the cops have done a few trial-runs out there, trying to tear down abandoned houses, but every time they have been met by protests and it has more than often ended up in street fighting with the cops, burned cars, and smashed windows. Obviously, this is not something we will just let the cops do and think they can get away with. Every time they have tried to do something to a house, professional workers have built a new one overnight! Rest assured that if they try to evict the people out of Christiania to make room for fuckin' yuppies, they will get hell in return!

MRR: How is life in Denmark in general? Is it easy? Are there punks in places other than Copenhagen?

Cormy: I would say yes, very much so. It's a lot less violent than where I come from. It's a lot less conformist in many ways, and people are a lot more open and free in terms of intellectual development, sexuality, education options, work options, etc. It's very easy to get an unbelievable level of social welfare and stay in interesting education options well into your 30s, and I had a wide range of very nice jobs there where I was decently paid, could dress how I wanted, and generally felt a lot more respected than everywhere I'd previously done shitwork. Copenhagen's a great place to live.

Christina: Denmark is a small country and this has the negative side effect that everything is under control. It's very hard to just disappear and live outside of society, squat houses, or trailer parks, etc. but living standards are pretty high and it's easy to get along if you have a little creativity. It's ridiculously easy to dumpster and fines for shoplifting is a farce, so the risks are minimal. Schools are free and you get a student-benefit when you take an education, so probably I'd have to say that it's fairly easy. There are punks spread all over the country and lots of bands!

MRR: The scene in your town has really young people involved; 15-year-old kids form pretty good bands. Do they stay in the scene when they grew up?

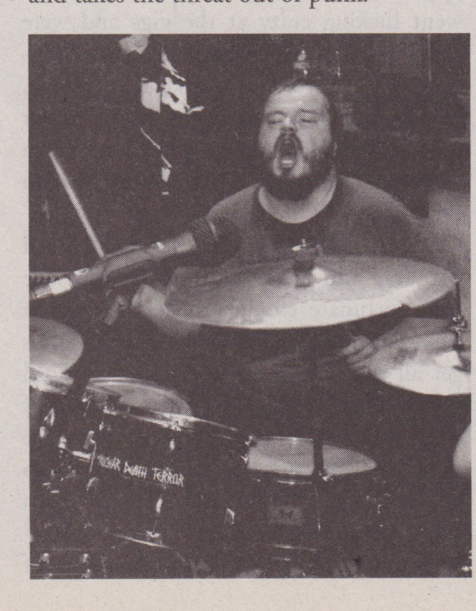
Cormy: 80% of them don't. It was weird for me to move there and become friends with people and see them disappear, as people tend to stick around and only become trusted after five years or so in Ireland, in a lot of ways (for better or for worse).

Christina: True—but at least we're lucky enough to have a big and growing scene with lots of active people in it, and if just two out of ten stick around, we'll be pretty well off! If you're into the whole MySpace thing, you should try and check out the bands Højspænding and Reaktion. These guys are from nine to twelve years old!

MRR: I heard also about drug problems among punks?

Cormy: Yeah, drugs came into the scene in a pretty big way in the last few years; they continue to as far as I'm aware. I think a lot of it had to do with a very anti-drug attitude that was around for many years in Ungdomshuset and Copenhagen, which arose as a necessary response to over-the-top drug abuse and addiction going on in the house in the '80s and early '90s, which affected everything that was going on there. However, the next generation who came in after that took the anti-drug doctrine as dogma and ended up with a very unbalanced view of things, and naturally, there came a reaction against those who were so authoritarian in relation to drugs, resulting in drug problems amongst young punx. I've used drugs for many years and continue to, and like everything, I believe it's a matter of personal responsibility. I've heard all sorts of ridiculous reasons against drug use, such as that you can't trust people when they're on drugs, etc. If that's a viable reason, you'd better ban alcohol as well, and perhaps loud music too, as that's another thing that causes people to get out of control. Maybe sex should go too; people's sex drives are pretty dangerous and unpredictable. I've been around a lot of the dogmatic PC punk types on any kind of chemical you could name, and for the most part they've been unaware that I was high or stoned on something, which goes some way to show the level of ignorance and misguidance involved. All I can say is that if you're going to use drugs, educate yourself, take it slow and easy, try not to make decisions about what to ingest when you're already intoxicated, stay the fuck away from heroin, and never ever fucking inject that shit.

Christina: Well, I guess I fall into the category of the PC punk types described… although it's not as black and white as it might seem. I agree that there has been a kind of taboo surrounding drug use/abuse and the situation Cormy describes is fairly true, but it's a learning experience for everyone, and I definitely believe that a lot of people are now learning to deal with it a much more serious way. You have to go through a lot of shit to really find yourself, and for some people that involves trying out drugs. But when that's been said, I still feel that hard drugs don't belong in any kind of radical environment where you have to be able to trust each other on a personal/political level. And by trust, I mean that you can snap out of being drunk (when the adrenaline takes over) if some critical situation occurs, like if a bunch of Nazis attack a gig or you have to deal with someone being violent at the gig you're at. And you're not just going to pop out of a chemical trip! I'm not going to argue that there are people out there, capable of controlling their drug use to an extent where it doesn't affect other people any more than if she/he was drinking, but I've also seen the long-term effects of drugs on people and how it fucking disables people and puts them out of the game. It turns great activists into apathetic and ineffective people and takes the threat out of punk!



MRR: Cormy, you moved to Copenhagen few years ago and now you went back to Ireland—why? How is punk scene there?

Cormy: I went back to Ireland to finish a degree in English Literature that I'd been studying some years ago and had never completed. I only planned to stay one year, to finish that, but then I ended up doing well and was offered a scholarship to stay and do a Masters degree, which is what I'm doing at the moment. It makes it hard to do stuff with the band, but I go to Copenhagen every four to six months to play, write, record, and tour with Nuclear Death Terror, and we do it like that. I'll be finished in mid-2008, and perhaps go on to do a PhD, though not in Ireland. The punk scene in Ireland is excellent. It's not easy to keep going, and it's down to the hard work of a couple of individuals (people like Damo from Easpa Measa/Tunguska/Mongolia) who've been heavily involved and dedicated to DIY for many years now. It's hard to find and keep venues, it's difficult for Irish bands to leave the country and tour, and it's ridiculously expensive to rehearse. As such, there's a great feeling of (bring out the cheese dish) unity. At gigs you'll have straight edge hardcore bands with street punk and Oi! bands, raw punk and crust bands, post-hardcore and electronic bands, hip-hop, metal, and stoner rock bands, etc. I love it. Compared to the exclusivity of scenes in other countries I've witnessed, I think it's fantastic. Keeps things fresh and interesting. In recent years, the scene has swelled since there's been a lot of immigrants coming to Ireland, mostly from Eastern Europe. I'm still getting used to the idea of people wanting to immigrate to Ireland, as until the '90s no one could get out of here quick enough! But now with Ireland's explosive economic success comes a huge wave of immigration, and there's now loads more punks here from other countries. It's mostly positive but there are problems with people who don't understand how we like to do things here. People who don't respect women or who insist on dancing violently at gigs, which we have absolutely zero tolerance for, so there's unfortunately been quite a lot of violence at gigs over the last year. Anyway, the scene here is excellent—check out De Novissimus, The Freebooters, Terrordactyl, Crowd Control, The Frigits, Another Day In Hell, Putrefaction, Drainland, Only

Fumes And Corpses… The scene is stronger than ever at the moment, musically.

MRR: There is another big city just 20 minutes by train from Copenhagen, but as it is across the water, it is in a different country. I'm talking about Malmö in Sweden, of course. Seems like people from both cities support each other and the national border doesn't disturb them too much?

Cormy: Yeah, there's a good cross-pollination, even though Ian from Fy Fan is a total bumpirate.

Christina: Malmö is a lot closer to Copenhagen than most Danish cities that do gigs. We have loads of friends there and we all go to each others' gigs if something cool is on the program. I consider bands like Skitkids, Fy Fan, Project Hopeless, Kamikatze, etc. to be just as local as any of the outer-Copenhagen bands that I ask to support when I do gigs!

MRR: Let's get back to the band—your first tour was quite a surprise for you?

Cormy: Yeah, ha ha, we were asked four days beforehand if we could step in to do a tour that our friend Andy had booked for his band, Motörhate, 'cos they had to pull out. We panicked, wondered, and then said, "Fuck yeah, we'll do it!" We borrowed our friend Daniel's van, which required being push-started every morning, and hit the road. It was pretty funny—we'd been playing and preparing a set for a long time before, but had just played our first gig and I think we might not have even recorded a demo by then? Anyway, it went amazingly, we had a lot of drunken fun, got offered records on lots of labels 'cos we were so great, blah, blah, blah.

Christina: Yeah, that was pretty amazing. Of course, people were expecting to see the other band playing melodic neo-crust-type music…and then we showed up! I hope nobody went away disappointed! As it turned out, we were playing a few gigs with some old-time friends of ours, Apatia No from Venezuela, and then we knew we were going to have a blast!

MRR: Then you toured with Visions of War?

Cormy: Nah, we did two tours in the UK and Northern Europe before that, as well as some short three-to-four day things in Sweden and Germany. Then we did the Scandinavian tour with Visions of War. Eh, yeah, the tour was cool and some good gigs, but it wasn't really what it should have been… it was just before this that Yogi left the band because of his drug addiction and then Jonas stepped in on drums to help us out, so for most of the tour I was getting drunk and depressed after people would ask where Yogi was and I had to explain (I wasn't going to lie about it). So the tour had a pretty big shadow cast over it since I was preoccupied with the problems of a former very close friend.

Christina: Yeah, I think we all felt like that. It was something we wanted to do for a long time, and it was great hanging out with Visions of War for the whole tour. I just wish we didn't have to tell Yogi that we didn't want to bring him on tour, but that was just a problem we had to deal with at the time.

MRR: This time you decided to go east, and do it in winter! How was Belarus? Was it hard to get into the country, and was it worth the attempt?

Cormy: Yeah, and we still can't figure out why the fuck we decided to go east in winter—as far as I remember, we'd planned to go to Italy and Greece?! Oh well, we survived the hellish frozen wastes, and it was actually one of the best tours ever! Belarus was excellent. We didn't have problems at the border like we'd expected and everything (aside from the crippling cold) went perfectly. We had excellent gigs and the punx in Minsk and Grodno took excellent care of us. It was totally worth the attempt, and I'd encourage every band that gets the opportunity to try and go there. People went fucking crazy at the gigs and were friendly and welcoming. I'm just disappointed that we didn't make it to Russia, Romania, Serbia, and some of the other less-traveled places that bands don't go to so regularly. I really hope we'll make it to those places in the coming years.

Christina: I'm so glad we decided to head that way and try to get into Belarus. We were fortunate enough to get to know a very nice guy called Ruslan, who helped us get all the necessary papers and arranged the gigs! We had these nightmare visions of a fortress you cannot enter when we thought of Belarus, but because of the help we got from Ruslan and Filip (Trujaca Fala), we were well-prepared and got to enter pretty easily after only about an hour of waiting. There's a good chance that the weather was a bit on our side as well, 'cause it was freezing fuckin' minus 23 degrees and none of the border cops wanted to tear the van apart outside… They probably just wanted to get it over with so they could go back behind their window and drink hot tea. We on the other hand, happily went back into our van that was just as freezing cold as it was outside!! All we could eat on the tour was the stuff we could consume at gas stations, because every time we tried buying food and drinks at a supermarket to think ahead, it would freeze up in the van and be impossible to eat! Haha!

MRR: So far you have a demo and LP out. Any plans for new recordings?

Cormy: Yes, we've just done a recording session in Sweden. Half of that's going on a four-way split LP with Guided Cradle, Instinct of Survival, and Visions of War, which we've been talking about for two years and is actually finally going to happen, and the other half is for a new 7" EP we'll have out on Plague Bearer in the next few months.

Christina: As I'm writing this, the 7" is just about to be sent to the press. Everything is finished and it looks great! We are all really satisfied with the end result, and just can't wait to get it out! The split will hopefully get out sometime this summer, but it's always hard to coordinate with all these bands! It's going to be a split release between Plague Bearer (Denmark), Hate Records (Germany) and Insane Society (Czech). Black Seeds (Malaysia/Ireland) and maybe another label will do the CD version.

MRR: Many people reading this had this pleasure to take part in the K-town and then Shit Town festivals, definitely one of the best DIY fests in Europe lately. Will it happen this year?

Christina: Yeah, we're doing it again this year. It will be the eight year we do it! Fuckin' crazy how time flies! Again this year, we'll call it Shit Town because Copenhagen is still a shitty place and we still don't have our own house to do it in. Maybe when we get a new house, we'll call it K-town again?? We will do the fest in Christiania in The Grey Hall and already have a lot of great bands and activities on the program. Check out **www.shit-town.dk** for more info about the festival! ■

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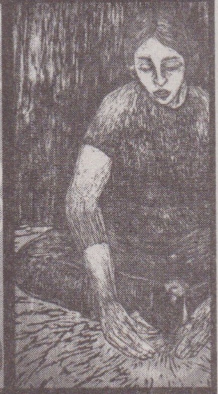

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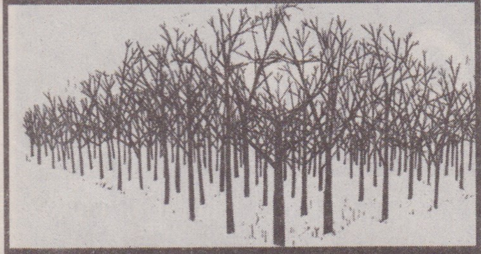

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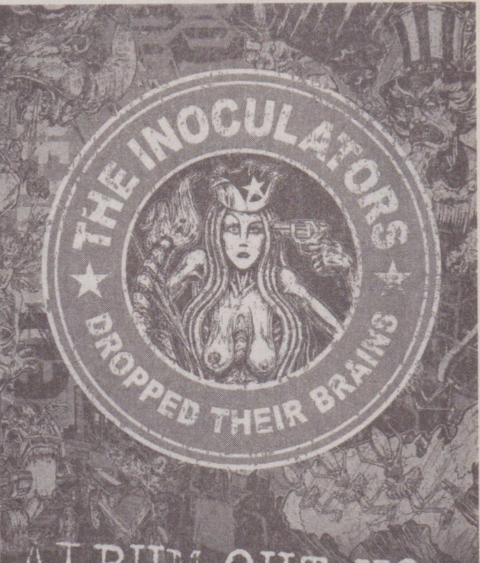
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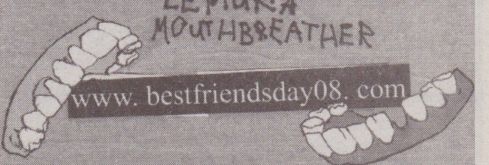

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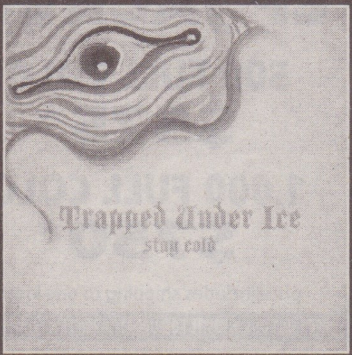
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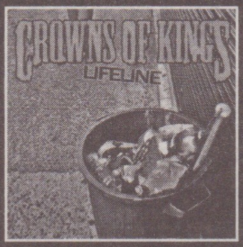
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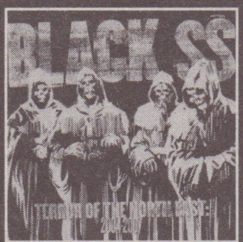
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NOT JUST SOMETHING TO BE SUNG
THE STORY OF...

THE WASTE

BY LANCE HAHN

When picking a name for a punk band in the '80s, the quotient was typically equal parts topical and shock value. It was inevitable that two bands from the anarcho scene would somehow wind up with the same name. While Toxic Waste in Northern Ireland started sometime in 1982, another Toxic Waste started up in Exeter.

Darren, from Year Zero Resource: "Toxic Waste started in the summer of '83 just after we'd left school, and we did our first gig at The Mitre in August '83. Our original guitarist Rob Stevens left, and Pete Moggeridge, who was a better guitarist, joined. Then Jim left for work reasons and we got Paul in on drums, who to my mind was a brilliant drummer. Once we had that lineup, we took things more seriously; for eighteen months or so it was serious, and we spent a lot more time practicing and writing. We played outside Exeter, a couple of gigs in London through Conflict with AYS and Fallout. The biggest gig we ever played was at the Hammersmith Clarendon and there were around fifteen hundred people there. Maybe if there was a bit more commitment from certain members we could have done a lot more touring, but it wasn't to be. Conflict helped us a lot. I met Colin and Paco on a Stop The City demo in London and we got talking and they offered us the support on a show they were playing at St. Georges Hall. We got on really well and things went from there. A friend, Fritz, really helped us as well, organizing things and coming to gigs with us. Another gig that we played out of Exeter was at Bridgewater Art Centre with The Varukers. I'd been up there before to see the UK Subs and it all kicked off then and apparently it used to happen all the time with a group of skinheads causing trouble at every gig. When we played, there was this underlying threat of violence, which there always was at a lot of punk gigs, but this was worse, really frightening. It kicked off for no reason at all and one of the Exeter punks that came down with us was put in the hospital for several days. It was horrible."

More commonly known as the Waste, the group was from the same area that had previously produced Metro Youth and was now experiencing something of a thriving punk scene. Founding member Darren Brown had been into punk for a few years before moving to Exeter.

Darren: "At the time, around 1979, I was living in Cornwall and all the kids were into rockabilly or disco, and then a mate got hold of the first Clash LP and I listened to that and never looked back. I couldn't really relate to anything else that was around at the time until then. I suppose at the time, it was something to feel a part of. I moved to Exeter in 1982 and the first people I met were the Rat Patrol people, Pip, our original drummer Jim Litchfield, and Andy Moxley, who was a big Clash fan. I just fell right into it."

From the start, Darren was as inspired by the politics of punk as he was by the music.

Darren: "Punk motivated me politically. Initially it was a youth cult, but then it evolved, so you followed the next stage—and, to me, politics was always going to be the next stage that it was going to go to. I don't think that it's quite the same punk scene now, but hopefully there are still people out there with similar beliefs."

With the second wave of punk splintering off into various tribes, he was inevitably drawn to the anarcho scene.

Darren: "It was very much the lyrics and the attitude of wanting to change things in society that were wrong. It's like, it was the 20th century and we were still hunting, there was vivisection, and with the nuclear weapons at the time, it was frightening and it felt like things were spiraling out of control. If people aren't prepared to stand up and say 'no,' I don't think that you can complain about things. The Exploited and those bands were just a joke—all those Oi! and skinhead bands. I liked some of the music, but the lyrics said nothing. On the Crass side of things, they were actually getting involved and doing things, which was the path that I wanted to take. Also, there was a good set of people involved. All the Exeter punks that listened to Crass and Conflict were more caring, while all the skinheads, whatever, were all arseholes. The little gang of Exeter skinheads and Mohican punks was all about getting off your head. That lifestyle just didn't appeal to me; I always felt that I had more to offer."

In the smaller punk scenes outside of London, it wasn't uncommon for many different subcultures to mix at gigs. This would often lead to conflicts due to political disagreements as well as band loyalties.

Darren: "I know punks who said that they were vegetarian but weren't. I knew why I was involved, but I don't think some people did. We slagged off some people on our single who said that they were punks, and I still see some of them. In 20 years, they haven't changed a bit, which I think is sad. Those people should just keep out of the way of people who are trying to be constructive and change things. Several times I just wanted to tell people who were fucking things up to just piss off, but then you hope that people who have come half-way, listening to the music and coming to the gigs, might be able to change. There were times when skinheads used to show up at punk gigs. Some of them were Nazis and maybe at the time, as we were younger and just out of school, we were intimidated, but later you get more suss about you. When I toured with Conflict, there were times when there would be fascists around to start trouble and we just wouldn't take it. We chased the BNP off with a shower of glasses, going after them, making sure that they didn't come back. When they were around in Exeter, I guess we were all a lot younger and more naïve, but that didn't ever mean that we weren't against them. We were scared that we might get a slap, but as time went on you got to know these people and feel that you could do something against them."

As Toxic Waste soon became the Waste, the group also was quick to take on serious issues in their content, quickly distancing themselves from the revivalist punk and Oi! groups.

Darren: "We were all a similar age at the time and part of the punk thing was that you could get in a band and do it yourself. We got it together and eventually became a kind of focal point for the political side of things in Exeter. A lot of bands just did a few gigs and then just split up, but we stayed together for quite a long time. I think the political side was already there anyway. I met people in the scene who had similar beliefs long before I did. It was a group of likeminded people who hadn't had any contact before getting together because of punk, with the same ideals about life and trying to change things. We were all angry young punks!"

While there was some friendly competition with other local punk bands of the time, they were also allies with the long-forgotten Another Voice, fronted by Sarah Chapple.

Darren: "There was always a bit of rivalry between us and DV8, as Jez was in DV8 initially. It was always a friendly rivalry though; we all used to see each other and play the same gigs. I liked what Another Voice was doing. Rat Patrol was established by then, and like Under the Gun, were a little older than us. Under the Gun was very professional about what they did. I think one of them used to be in Anti-Pasti before he moved to Exeter. Both those bands drew on an earlier punk influence than us. All the bands were friends and I respected anyone who was in a band at the time; there was just so much happening. I think I was really lucky to be around at that time."

As animal rights became more and more of a leading issue in the anarcho scene, more and more bands began to write songs about vegetarianism and against vivisection. While Crass themselves only wrote about animal welfare on a couple of occasions, the fight was picked up by groups like Conflict and their anger had a rippling effect.

Darren: "For me, I got really into Conflict and started roadie-ing for them. It was something that was really close to my heart anyway and being around people who were pushing it so much further meant I was in the right place at the right time. I actually didn't hold vegetarian or vegan beliefs any higher than anti-nuclear or other beliefs, but maybe I felt at the time that we could achieve more through that. If you spread yourself thinly, then you do nothing, but if you concentrate on one area, then you might achieve something. Down the years, I think the animal rights movement has achieved things. You can see that now with the debate on hunting with dogs going through parliament. Very early on with Toxic Waste we did the song "Animals v Man." We were all vegetarians at the time. I've been a vegetarian since I was sixteen. People always tried to differentiate between different parts of the movement, but it was all part of the same thing. There were a lot of punks involved, but not everyone had ripped jeans and spiky hair; there were like middle class hippies and students involved as well."

With hunt sab groups starting up all around the country and the totally autonomous ALF cells also doing actions, it was easy to get excited about the cause. Not only was this something worth getting angry about (certainly there were a lot of angry songs), but it was something with which you could get involved that had a clear affect.

Darren: "To a certain extent, I think it was more political here. I remember with the hunt sabs, only the Wolverhampton hunt sabs had a bigger reputation for being nutters than the Exeter lot did. It actually helped to have that sort of reputation, as sometimes we would show up and the hunters would see us and just go home. Just our physical presence at times was enough to have that effect. After every sab, we would have to go to the local police station to pick people up, or the local hospital. It was give-and-take, but we held our own. We had a certain reputation, which wasn't a nice one to have, but it was beneficial. There were a lot of Exeter punks involved with this, and we used to share vans with the university hunt sabs."

Having bonded closely with Conflict, the Waste was invited to record a 7" for Mortarhate in 1984. Titled *Not Just Something to Be Sung*, the EP has some great poppy punk, with the first track a funny taunt to a hunter who has had the tables turned.

Run, hunter, run, hunter
Run, run, run
If we catch you
You'll be dead son

Sung almost like a nursery rhyme, the memorable little tune made the record unforgettable compared to a lot of the punk records coming out at that time.

In the meantime, a local squat scene was also growing in Exeter. Squatting always sounds so appealing, especially to autonomous groups that want to live outside of utility payments and landlords. But every country, every city has different laws and different ways of dealing with squatters. Exeter wasn't especially patient.

Darren: "That all lasted for around six months of 1985, and to me, that was one of the best things that we ever did—not just The Waste but the whole Exeter scene. The old UB40 Centre off Howell Road had been empty for ages beforehand. I remember everyone turning up on the night, getting in and making the place secure. Everyone was working together. People were making steps, there was a vegan cafe and mattresses for people who were staying over, and gigs every Saturday night with people being charged whatever it took to cover costs. This was something that was ours. At the first gig with us, DV8, Field of Crosses, Beast, and Under the Gun, there were about two hundred people there and it was brilliant. There were about fifteen or twenty people involved in pulling the whole thing together and the day-to-day running of it. Someone had to be there all the time so it was done as a shift system. That first squat became known as The Pig and Bailiff and it became a real focal point; a lot of the bands wouldn't have been so close or even happened without it. There was a lot of squatting that went on in Exeter in various empty houses, but I did feel after the first one that it went downhill. The Pig and Bailiff was a perfect venue compared to a house in a residential area. It was central and it was on two floors, but the council wanted us out and that was the end of the story. They took us to court for the eviction order. There were four people defending us, and the judge actually commended us for how we were using the building but had to give the verdict against us. The judge didn't have to say that in our favor, but he did. After that, it did go downhill and it annoyed me with some of the later squats that the houses got damaged as there was no need for it. It was like, "we're getting kicked out tomorrow so let's smash the place up!" There was nothing constructive coming out of that. If the eviction order has been served, you should just get things together and move on and try and make things better the next time. There was a squat with gigs in Magdalen Road, Blackhall Road, and one above a carpet shop in Sidwell Street. The more it went on, I think people lost the reason why they were doing it in the first place. Once the places began to get smashed up, it began to give us all a bad name and we began to lose opportunities."

The squat scene, along with the relentless animal rights activity, forced the police to respond with more and more severity.

Darren: "We were hunt sabbing every week, but we were involved in other things like criminal damage towards certain laboratories that were testing on animals, butchers shops, fur shops. There used to be a fur shop in Princesshay that sadly closed down for whatever reason. I suppose be we were young and naïve to a certain extent and we were all trying to do too much too soon, so you got your face known and people heard rumors and the police got onto it in the end. There were around ten other Exeter punks who were really up for it and ended up getting similar grief to me. By the end, even though some people got away with things, the police knew who was doing what. They knew about me and I was involved in various cases. The police confiscated my copies of *Class War* and *ALF* magazines for no other reason than they were there. I also had a cop turn up to my door every Sunday asking me if I would testify for the police and of course I'd say "no." At one point, I had a curfew from seven at night to seven in the morning. The regret that I have in all of this is that the things that I was involved in could possibly have been planned a bit better, but again, we were teenagers at the time, trying to change the world, and you make mistakes. I certainly lost my liberty."

Plus, the advent of hard drugs, totally avoided in some anarcho circles, was making more of a presence in the punk scene, and with it came the predictable police response.

Darren: "I did drugs but I wasn't really into that scene. A lot of people around me were, including our drummer Paul. He couldn't really cope with life and the drugs didn't help. At first we were into just mushrooms and hash, but for some people that just escalated and made them speed freaks or got them into heroin. To a certain extent, I think the punk scene lent itself towards drug culture, like you don't conform and just because you're told something is wrong it doesn't mean that you have to believe it. I saw it happen but I didn't really get involved."

During this period, the band began to unravel.

Darren: "I'm not a psychologist, but it didn't help. I saw a change while he was still in the band. There was one time that he sold the best part of his drum kit just so he could get pissed, which obviously annoyed the rest of the band. We also knew that being the drummer in the band was nine-tenths of his life, but then he couldn't control the other part of his life. He couldn't say no to drink or drugs and eventually hung himself. It was all very sad."

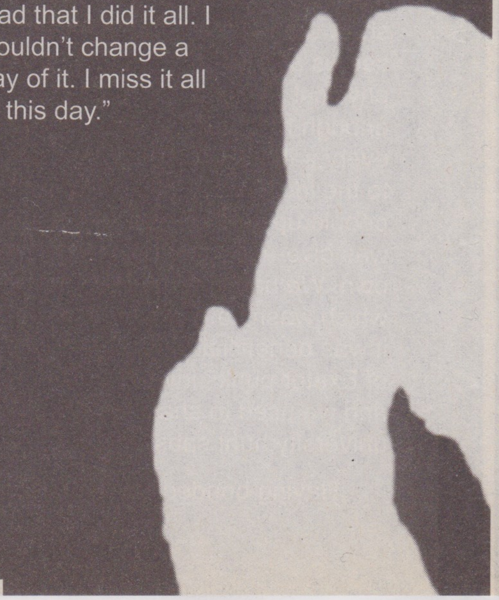
With Darren's incarceration for animal rights activities, the band pretty much split for good.

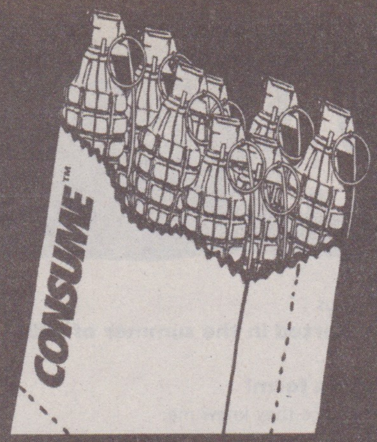
Darren: "Jez left the band and then Spike joined. Jez was a lovely bloke, but Spike was a better bass player. Unfortunately I was detained for several months at her majesty's pleasure, and while I was inside Spike had been kicked out and Jez had been brought back in. Spike could be difficult at times, but I began to think that maybe the others don't want this as much as I did. Things did get better though, and we played some of our best gigs, including the best and last one we ever did at Bart's Tavern, as well as our best recording, *Society's Rejects* at Tricky Sounds. The final straw, though, was when the band just didn't show up for a gig at the Electric Ballroom in London with Conflict and Liberty, which would have been our biggest gig. They didn't show up and that was it, really. There were things behind it. Paul was having problems with his alcohol and drugs, and when that sort of thing begins to take a grip, it's difficult to get motivated. Me getting sent down and putting the hunt sabbing before practices. Things were moving quite fast, and not only the band but the people around us were beginning to take a step back; things were getting very serious. It was a rollercoaster of a ride. People started to move away. Some of the central figures moved and the scene suffered. I moved to Lincoln. I had to leave, as at the time I ended up being banned from attending any hunt sab in the country and I was under a lot of pressure from the police here. I used to get woken up at three in the morning by police knocking at the door, giving me grief, and one night I was out in the pub and I saw two plainclothes officers sitting at a table watching what I was up to. I couldn't move and had to get out. Other punks were getting the same hassle and moved as well. When I did come back, there wasn't the same feeling about the place. For a town the size of Exeter, there was an extraordinary amount of people that wanted to change things."

It's inspiring to know that another band was willing to go down for their beliefs and to know how committed some of these musicians were to the political causes. But especially listening back to their Mortarhate EP, it really does seem like such a waste that the group wasn't able to do more due to prison time.

Darren: "The band actually stayed together for a little while and I think they played a gig without me with Pete singing. When I returned, I did think about it. Paul, Jez, and Pete were all still around, but in a way our time had gone. Like I said, a lot of people had moved away and Exeter had moved on.

"I'm totally glad I was around then and totally glad that I did it all. I wouldn't change a day of it. I miss it all to this day."





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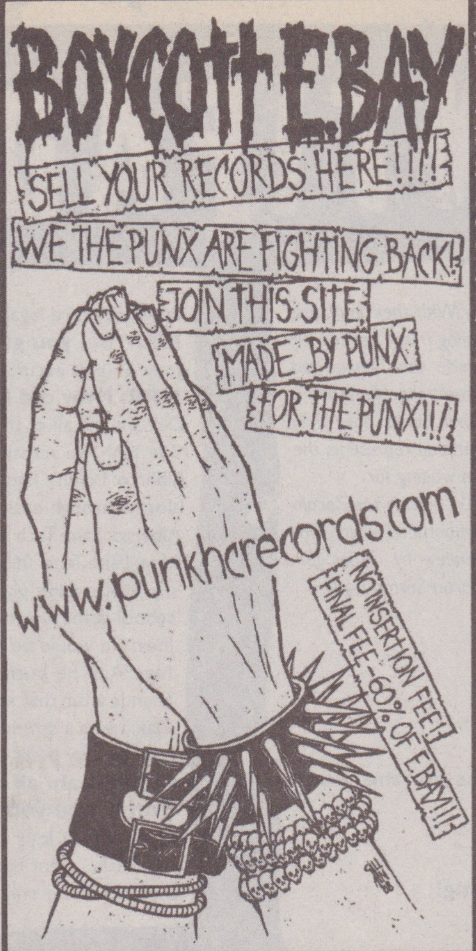

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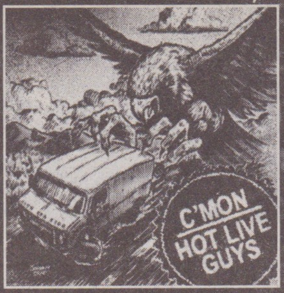

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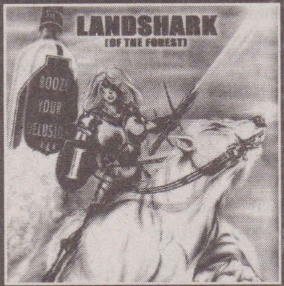

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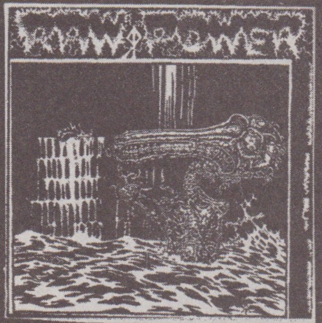

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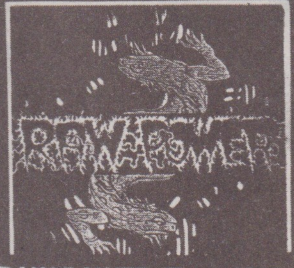

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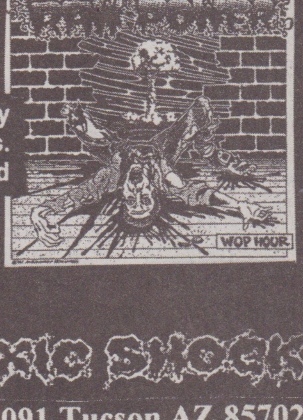

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I get goosebumps each time I see Intifada play. With their loud, fast, thrashin' style, they are turning heads and bringing much needed fun back to punk. Their live shows always include the unexpected, whether it's cross-dressing, costumes, or the trampoline featured at this year's Latino Fest. They know that 14 other bands have their name, but they simply don't give a fuck. This Intifada represents the youth takeover that the Chicago scene has been waiting for.

This interview was conducted November 17, 2007 outside the Zocalo Urbano, a youth center in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood, which was the host to that night's DIY punk show. Interview by Carlos (Sin Orden) and Megan (Condenada). Photos by Martin Sorrondeguy.

Noe Castro – Voice
Joey Iglesias – Guitar
Alberto Ruiz – Drums
Oak Subchareon – Bass

MRR: We wrote these questions in the nude. So…they're sexy. Get ready!

Joey: Party time!

MRR: Okay, first some fact-checking!

Alberto: We're legal, trust us.

MRR: So, you guys started in the summer of 2005?

Joey: Sounds accurate.

MRR: How did Intifada form?

Oak: I knew all of them before they knew me.

Noe: Yeah, we actually knew each other...

Alberto: I didn't know Joey though.

Noe: ...through each other.

Alberto: Lane Tech [High School]. It all started at Lane Tech.

Noe: Lane Tech '06! Anyway, I started going to shows because of my brother. He plays in No Slogan. And then I met Alberto in school somewhere eating lunch.

Joey: He would be eating, wouldn't he?

Noe: And he borrowed like a million CDs and then we were friends after that somehow.

Oak: I was a street punk kid.

Joey: Liberty punk mohawk!

MRR: Yeah, all of you have different hairstyles now from when you started playing.

Alberto: Yeah, Joey actually went back to… No, he had a fro-hawk.

Joey: Yeah, I went back to the standard Puerto Rican.

Oak: Noe's the only one who had regular hair.

LIFE CRISIS
LIFE CRISIS

Joey: Last of the Mohicans over there.

Noe: Back to the story! I just started flyering at Lane. I gave Alberto a flyer and he went to a show and he was like "Holy shit! Sin Orden! This is awesome."

MRR: Name-dropping!

Noe: And then Joey went to a show with us, this big show at the tire shop, and that was his first show.

Joey: Southkore show.

Oak: You invited me to Chicago fest [2005], me and Mike. That was our first DIY show (before that we were only going to street punk shows). And that kind of blew my mind.

MRR: What kinds of differences did you notice going from bigger venue shows to DIY shows?

Oak: Oh, huge differences! Everyone was...

Joey: Friendly.

Oak: ...very not superficial. At street punk shows everyone would give me weird looks 'cause I didn't quite have the professional street punk look. And here everyone was cool. Everyone was older. Everyone seemed to know each other and have these crazy underground records that were just badass. And every band was the style of music I was looking for. I was looking for more hardcore and faster shit and every band there was like insanely amazing.

Alberto: One thing I noticed was that I wasn't the only brown kid.

Noe: Yeah.

Alberto: Remember Metro days?

Oak: I was still the only Asian kid for the most part. *[Everyone laughs.]* I will always be.

Noe: That's the thing, these guys started out going to Metro shows. My first show was the last Non Fiction Noise show.

MRR: Oh shit!

Alberto: Pop the collar!

Noe: Where I saw Reaccion (dropping names).

Alberto: Re-who?

Noe: I never really went to Metro shows. I met Alberto and I went to some ska fest.

Alberto: That was badass.

MRR: OK, so question number two.

Joey: I don't think we finished with how we became a band.

Noe: Long story short, we met each other—

Oak: Minus me.

Noe: Alberto, Joey and I were like, "Let's start a band. OK, cool." And then we started writing songs and covering bands that we knew. I Attack. We started covering bands we had seen like the day before.

Alberto: Well, if they wrote their shit more complicated...

Noe: And then we tried out a few bassists and they all sucked.

Alberto: White boys!

Noe: We knew Oak and then we were like, "Hey, Oak, do you wanna play a few shows with us as a temporary—"

Alberto: Yeah, 'cause he was starting up Abrade at the same time. Us and Abrade started at the same time.

Noe: He just stuck. We couldn't get rid of him.

Oak: Naw, it was like the second show and the third show was on the same night as the Caustic Christ and Hammer show and I was like, alright you gotta choose: Am I the permanent bassist or not 'cause I'm gonna go to this show if not and then Benny [No Slogan] kinda convinced me, "You could be in two bands!" and then Porno was like, "Just let him in."

MRR: Who's Porno?

[Everyone laughs.]

Joey: Noe's Porno.

MRR: Oh, we'll talk about that later. There's a back-story there... So, other bands have the same name, Intifada. It seems like you guys have fun with that. How did you choose the name?

Joey: We don't take it seriously at all. We ask them to play shows with us. We want to have an Intifada fest one day.

MRR: How many other Intifadas have you found?

Joey: Well, on Myspace there's like 14. But when we started it was only us and some crappy garage metal band that was only one dude with a guitar. So, after we had our songs and we put our stuff up with all the instruments all these Intifadas started popping up. There's an Intifada hip hop band in Puerto Rico.

Alberto: He's from awhile back though.

MRR: How did you come up with the name?

Alberto: I was talking to my friend Luz. This was in summer school and I saw the definition of the word Intifada and I thought that was pretty cool. That was pretty dope, you know. Uprising. It doesn't really have to pertain to any specific political agenda. It's really ambiguous. Uprising against what you don't like. It could be the government. I guess we sing about a lot of shit we don't like. We're a bunch of haters, really.

Joey: The name has nothing to do with Palestine. Everybody thinks it does. The word does, but not us, the band.

Alberto: We all have our separate political views. They're common but we each have our own views. That's a whole different story.

MRR: We'll get to that.

Alberto: That's when we'll start crying.

MRR: Somebody is gonna cry today.

Joey: All of us simultaneously.

MRR: Hi, my name is Carlos Ruiz, FOX News Chicago. Have you ever run into trouble with your band name or your record title *First to Terrorize*, especially with the fear of terrorism here in the US?

Noe: No one's really called us out on it like, "What's wrong with you? How could you say that?"

Alberto: Well, the crowds we hang out with.

Joey: White people terrorized Native Americans first! Stop beating around the bush.

Noe: Yeah, that's one of the reasons we wrote "First to Terrorize." It's one of the first songs we wrote and it's about how we're talking about getting rid of terrorism and fighting terrorism. I just think it's hypocritical to say that, especially when they're trying to close the borders because the "terrorists" will come through the Mexican border. It's like, no man, it's fucking people that want to work and have a shot. [Europeans] were the first to terrorize because they were the first to come here and take land and wipe out almost an entire race.

MRR: Thanksgiving's coming up!

Noe: Exactly, we played a show the day before Thanksgiving last year and I made a point to say that this is what it's about.

Joey: We've been warned by an Arabic person. "Intifada means this…"

Alberto: We knew what it meant!

Joey: But the "Zionist Jews will take offense to it."

Noe: Yeah, a friend of ours told us that we should look out for Zionist Jews because they have a big problem with the whole intifada thing.

Alberto: We've all seen *Munich*.

Joey: I love Mel Gibson!

MRR: How does culture and identity play a part in your band?

Oak: I'm Asian.

[Everyone laughs.]

Alberto: We just happen to be a majority brown band with, you know, a little rice in there.

Joey: Fried rice!

Alberto: Left a little too long in the pot. Naw, but we do sometimes feel that people look at us weird. Like, in Indiana. We fucking stood out. God damn!

Noe: The first show we played in Indiana was this garage full of white kids and Joey, Alberto, and myself.

Oak: Oh yeah, I'm totally white, too.

Alberto: Model minority!

Noe: We've never gotten serious shit because we're brown.

Alberto: Well, when we were in Tennessee, you guys were getting gas but some guys said "Go home!" or some shit and it was directed at us not Pygmy Death [a band we were on tour with]. It was the fourth of July and those motherfuckers were walking around with no shirt and their kids were holding the beer.

Oak: I don't know. I think that race has never been an issue for me. I never think about it. It never comes in my mind. I mean, to me we're all the same. White kids. Whatever. I'm cool with everyone.

Noe: I think about it all the time.

Oak: Among friends we'll joke about it but as far as hardcore racism and the band goes, nothing like that. I've experienced stuff outside.

Alberto: I think it's just different 'cause our generation is used to the whole melting pot thing of America.

Joey: It's being taught more in schools.

Alberto: And plus, we all went to inner-city schools so you're gonna see the white kids, Asian kids, the blacks, the Latinos. We all intermingle.

Joey: We went to Lane Tech. So that was a pretty mixed school. 4,000 kids. Very diverse.

Noe: So, as far as identity…

Alberto: I mean, we're all proud of being what we are but at the same time we're not over-the-top extremists, like "Oh, you gotta be this or we won't be friends with you."

Noe: I am.

[Everyone laughs.]

Joey: Do we have any Latino Power songs?

Alberto: We have songs in Spanish but that doesn't necessarily mean we're…

Joey: I think all of our songs are based on Noe's personal experiences.

Noe: That could be it.

Joey: But I don't think we have any heavy racism songs. Well, not like racist songs but pro-race or "our race."

Alberto: It's all the human race. That's all it really is.

Joey: PMA.

Alberto: Shit. I believe in that.

Joey: Positive, man.

MRR: Well, the question…

Alberto: We're totally off the question.

Joey: Delete all of that beep.

MRR: Which will be deleted. I'm not saying it's about being pro- whatever and excluding anybody else, I'm just saying that your band is looked at…

Joey: We're brown. First things first.

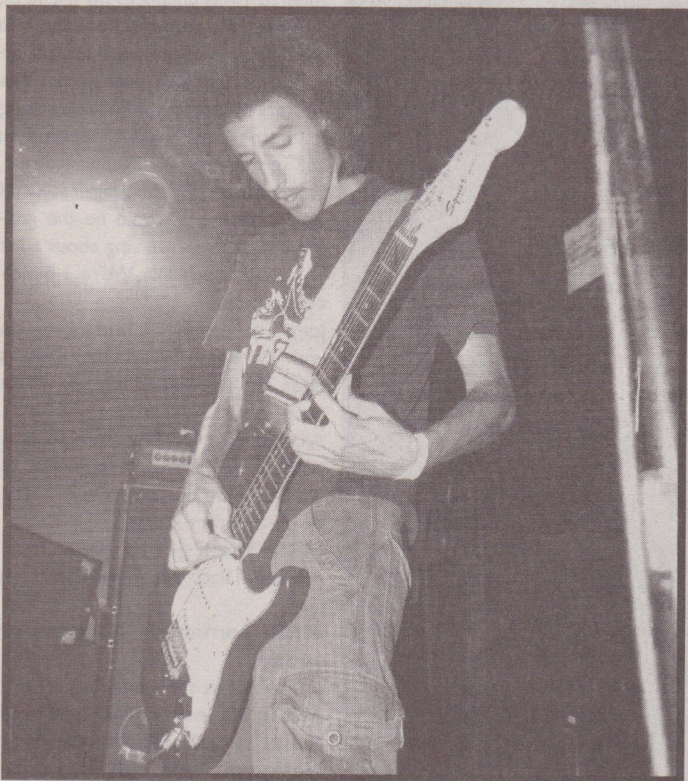
MRR: Yeah, exactly.

Alberto: We do stand out at certain shows 'cause we don't only play the Southkore shows or the predominantly Latino hardcore shows. We play other shows where we do fucking stand out.

Oak: All of tour.

Alberto: Oh my God, yeah.

Oak: We stand out musically 'cause we're awesome.



MRR: What do you want people to get out of your music and lyrics when you play?

Joey: A black eye.

Oak: Where you jump around and have fun.

Noe: As far as music…yeah, run around and have fun. Be crazy. Be stupid.

Joey: We're not trying to send any messages out to anybody.

Oak: We're not trying to start a revolution.

Joey: We're trying to have fun, man. We're kids.

Noe: I guess lyrically, just don't be ignorant. That's really all I ask of people. Don't stick to conventional thinking.

Alberto: Question everything. That's what it's about.

Noe: Question the fact that you're questioning.

Alberto: You're on some trippy shit.

Oak: Question your life!

MRR: Who are some of your influences and how have they changed since you started?

Alberto: Lynyrd Skynyrd.

Noe: Thin Lizzy.

Alberto: Well, who are the five best bands and Intifada.

Oak: Los Crudos.

Joey: Yeah, definitely.

Oak: Scholastic Deth, Life Crisis.

Joey: Musically, maybe. When we started, it was all of the local bands of Southkore 'cause we were like, "If they can do it, we can do it…"

Noe: Better!

Oak: For me, it was Intifada itself 'cause when I joined the band, I didn't write any of the songs. And just listening it was like, "Wow, these guys are writing some unique, really good shit, man." I got really pumped from the songs. Playing with Intifada, I was really proud of the shit they had written. While I was playing with Abrade, I was really insecure, like, man, our shit sucks, but with these guys, man, this is some good shit.

MRR: That is true.

Alberto: Definitely our influences change as we go by. We'll hear a different band. Music is an ever-evolving thing.

MRR: What bands are you guys talking about in practice nowadays?

Oak: Scholastic Deth, Life Crisis, La Piovra.

Noe: Even though we sound nothing like them…yet!

Joey: Just you wait and see. On our next 7" their songs will be played backwards.

Alberto: Sin Orden.

MRR: Did you hear that?

Alberto: Condenalgas.

Noe: As of now all of these fast energetic bands.

Alberto: That's mainly what I want it to be. A fast, energetic band. Not necessarily brutal. Just energetic.

Oak: Hit Me Back. Oh my God, those guys are awesome.

Noe: For a long time, Hit Me Back was a huge influence.

Alberto: And locals, like In Pursuit, they're fucking amazing. They're this local band that started up last year. Straight-up '80s hardcore. Pygmy Death, too bad they're breaking up because they're good friends.

Joey: Rest in peace.

Oak: It's like my best friend's dying.

Noe: A lot of the time our influences are other bands our age, just because they're doing it too. It's like, fuck yeah! Why watch some 30-year-old when—

MRR: How old is everybody?

Joey: 18 or 19.

Noe: We're getting older. We need kids to fill the void.

Joey: Yeah, we need people to replace us.

Alberto: That's another thing we would like to start. If we want to start a revolution, per se, just to get kids to pick up more instruments and do this shit.

Noe: That's also a big message. Start a band.

Alberto: We have a few songs about that, actually.

MRR: Do you think the Chicago scene is welcome and friendly to younger kids? Does anything need to change?

Alberto: Depends who you play with.

Joey: When we started watching music live, it was at these big venues. So these kids will come to [DIY] shows and be like, "It's in a basement. What's going on?" That kinda drops a few kids out of the picture.

Alberto: The Southside, too.

Joey: Yeah, most of our shows are really down south and people will say, "Why can't you have a show up north, I really wanna go."

Alberto: It's hard to get a place on the Northside.

Oak: Kids, like Morbid Obesity, were going to shows at least a year before they started their band. We already knew them so at their first show we welcomed them and shit.

Alberto: Eric Miller is the shit.

Oak: I think Securicor, we'd seen them around before they played. No one starts out great, but we'll give them shows and when they get good we'll get them more shows.

Alberto: That's what we try to do, just try and…

Oak: Support the new kids.

Alberto: Just like when we first started going to shows. This sense of camaraderie. Everyone was so cool and nobody was like—well, there's always a few people with their heads up their asses. I'm not going to drop names…Carlos…Ruiz.

[laughter]

Noe: Yeah, that's the thing. Metro shows are inviting to kids because there're other kids. The thing about local shows and basement shows is that a lot of the crowds tend to be older. That's the thing I noticed when I first started going to shows, and that's the thing I still notice now. Some kids will get turned off to the idea of going to all these local shows because a lot of the crowd is older.

MRR: Intimidated?

All: Yeah.

Oak: Recently there's been an explosion of kids coming to shows. When I first started going to shows, I was the youngest kid. I was the only kid there. Maybe Noe or these guys…and then, I don't know, I guess word spread out and there's a bunch more kids.

Alberto: Yeah, when we first started going to shows and seeing all of you guys' bands, we felt like the youngest ones.

Noe: We were the novelty act 'cause we were young.

MRR: Where are these kids coming from now?

Oak: Kids that were into street punk two years ago, just like me. You know, I was a street punk kid and we were all like listening to more underground, more DIY stuff, and then realized, "Oh, this is going on in our own backyard." 'Cause before Chicago Fest, I didn't even know Chicago had a scene. I was like, Chicago sucks, there're no street punk kids, there's nothing and then this guy invited me and it literally blew my mind. I saw all of this stuff, all DIY, and it just gave me a mind trip. I was like, I gotta start going to more of this stuff.

Alberto: That was a factor that was really appealing to me. The whole DIY thing. The fact that you could bring bands from out of town. Set up your own show. Like this show [Resistant Culture/Disaster Strikes show at Zocalo Urbano]. I helped set it up and to me that's mind blowing that I'm bringing bands from Boston and Los Angeles and shit.

Noe: Yeah, and that's such a mentality that needs to stop with kids, that idol worship shit, like "Oh, this band's finally coming to town after not playing for 20 years" when you could start a band and you can do your own shows (just don't get busted by cops).

MRR: Um, next question.

Joey: I'm not crying yet.

MRR: So, what were some surprises when you played out of town, going out on tour?

Alberto: How people won't stay around for the touring band if they don't know you.

Noe: Yeah. That you have to have built up some sort of name or fame for people to stick around.

Alberto: Or you have to sound like the Dead Kennedys.

Oak: Ignore that.

MRR: Strike it.

Joey: The only thing that really surprised me was New Jersey. When we got there, it was all kids. It was all straight-up kids, and the venue too. It was a really cool venue. Usually, you need a couple of adults around to set up the show for you.

MRR: Was that one of your most memorable shows on tour?

Alberto: I guess. But memorable for the wrong reasons.

Noe: Because we got lost on the way there. We got separated at the Turnpike in New York and that sucked. And we ended up playing first, his high hat stand got broken or bent or something.

Alberto: By a drummer of a band I won't mention. The name starts with an "R" and ends with an "–abia."

Oak: The only thing that sucked about that show was that we played a shorter set than all the local bands and we could have fit all three of our bands in one of their sets. (We went on tour with Abrade and Pygmy Death.) And they only let one of us play.

Joey: And we got a really good response from Jersey, too. That was surprising.

Noe: The surprising thing overall about tour is that there were a lot of kids.

Joey: And that we got good responses in most places we played.

Oak: And how freakin' fun it was.

Alberto: Cincinnati was amazing. Holy shit! We weren't expecting that shit. Cincinnati, Fourth of July, in the middle of the hood, and—

Joey: Raw corn…mmm.

Alberto: Yeah, that guy didn't even try. No, but he did a hell of a job promoting the show and everyone went nuts for us. It was insane. They told us Cincinnati's not usually like this and we brought it out and we were like OK, shit, pop the collar!

Noe: The biggest surprises were the kids and the hosts.

Alberto: Shout out to Esneider and Jane!

Joey: And Lucho!

Noe: It's just nice to know that someone will trust a bunch of dirty, non-showering kids and let them into their house.

Alberto: Esneider is the shit. He can cook!

MRR: Speaking of the kids, at shows in general, do you feel listened to by the adults that are in attendance (as opposed to the other adults in your lives who might not listen to you 'cause "you're just a bunch of kids")?

Joey: No one can understand Noe anyway.

Alberto: Sometimes I feel like that, because half the time the adults (at shows) just go out and smoke or drink—not that there's anything wrong with that. I'm not straight edge or anything, but if you're here to see a show, you're here to see a show. You can go drink at the bar, you're fuckin' 21, ya know. Yeah, that just annoys me that if they don't really like you or know you, they won't stick around and watch your set. They come and support their friend's band who's like 50.

Oal: I think they're blown away by our performances, but as far as listening to us…maybe not. A lot of people were talking during our sets. Um, other than that I don't mind. When we went to New York we listened to all of Esneider's stories and we were all fascinated.

MRR: He is an amazing storyteller.

Oak: I didn't even wanna talk, I just wanted to listen, to learn from his wisdom.

MRR: What are your favorite parts of the Chicago scene?

Joey: There're people that help you.

Alberto: Yeah, there's all the people we know, like you guys, the No Slogan guys. That's the thing. I hear about a lot of bands who have, I don't want to say beef, but there're little tidbits of stuff that always go through…but as far as I see it, we're cool with everybody. I don't know if we have shit with anybody. And we try to keep it that way 'cause we like to be together with everybody and talk to everybody. It's just music. That's all it is.

Oak: My favorite part about the scene is that everyone knows everyone and I feel like everyone is my friend and I could trust anyone in the Chicago scene. I always recognize faces. I love seeing people that I know and knowing that I could trust them. And also the diversity. There're so many kinds of music you can find shows of. Everything from powerviolence and metal to old school punk to anything. And the people. Those are my favorite parts of the scene.

Noe: Just the fact that there's a support system. If you don't have something, someone will let you borrow it.

Alberto: For the most part. Except for some bands.

Joey: Black September.

Noe: Stop talking shit!

Alberto: Septiembre Negro.

MRR: What's the hardest part about being in a band and what holds it all together for you?

Noe: The hardest part? Trying to deal with everybody.

MRR: Well, a lot of people from the outside might say, oh, you play shows, but not really get the commitment that each of you brings to the band.

Noe: Yeah.

Alberto: Honestly, I can't imagine me being out of a band, 'cause like what the fuck would I do?

Joey: Play Halo all day long.

Noe: Yeah, we would have no lives.

Alberto: Yea, play Halo. In all honesty, I'm glad we all knew each other and had an established friendship before. If not, this wouldn't have worked out. There've been times when we're all pissy at each other but in the end we're friends. Whenever we're hanging out, we call each other up and it doesn't necessarily have to be music-related shit.

Joey: Halo.

Noe: Right. We'll all get together and play Halo till two in the morning.

Alberto: Is this where we start crying?

Joey: This is so beautiful!

Oak: It's easy to be in a band 'cause we're just basically friends that just happen to play music together. If we weren't in a band, we might not hang out quite as much, but it's easy, we're all friends. Two of us don't have jobs. I don't know what we'd be doing if we didn't have a band.

Joey: Yeah, seriously…play Halo all day.

Alberto: I noticed that now that I started school, I bet Noe's felt it too. It's a pain in the ass. Like me, I'm going to school, I work two jobs, and I still find time to be in this band, and I'm in another band…Rat Bastards.

All: Damn! Name-dropping!

Alberto: Myspace.com/ratbastards.

Oak: Abrade!

[laughter]

Noe: It's hard balancing everything. Working and going to school, like Alberto said, but you gotta find time for it, 'cause if I didn't I'd go crazy.

Joey: It is a stress reliever, big time. You get to run in a circle, which you can't do in public 'cause people will look at you weird. Yeah man, that kid's got a lot of energy. You can't really release stress anywhere else unless you go to the gym or something.

Noe: And none of us will ever go to the gym.

Oak: I was thinking about joining a gym.

Noe: By our second 7" we're all gonna be huge! And our front cover is just gonna be us—

A: With our shirts off!

Joey: In speedos…oiled up. *[Striking a muscle pose]* The bathroom is that way!

MRR: This next question is directed to Oak.

All: Ohhh. Make him cry!

MRR: How do you feel playing in a band that is mostly Latinos? And how do you feel playing in a mostly Latino scene?

Oak: I don't feel left out at all, to be honest.

Alberto: He looks Mexican.

Oak: A lot of my friends are Latino and I don't feel any different. They're just my friends to me. Playing shows with Latino kids, you know, it's cool. Whatever, Latino kids, white kids, black kids, Asian kids. There aren't too many black kids or Asian kids, but it's all…I've never seen race as ever being an issue to me, anyways. I've gotten my ass beat by Nazis twice, but to me it's just not a part of everyday life. Everyone's the same to me. And as far as being a Latino band, it's cool. I love Latino people. I'm trying to learn Spanish. They can help me out and shit. I think it's cool. Yeah, I like it.

Joey: Tacos y burritos!

Alberto: Yes, yes, fly. *[laughter]*

Joey: Inside joke, sorry!

MRR: So, what all does Intifada have out now?

Joey: We have the demo, which is online only, that we recorded with a karaoke machine and one mic. Then we added vocals via computer. That was pretty decent actually. We got a lot of fans just 'cause of our MySpace page.

Noe: We were surprised just from the reaction of those crappy first recordings. After our first recording session with Amador [Noe's bro and bassist/now guitarist of No Slogan] we put out a CD, *A Couple Two Tree Songs*.

Alberto: 'Cause our 7" wasn't ready by Southkore fest ['06].

Joey: And we needed money.

Oak: *A Couple Two Tree Songs* was actually four songs.

Noe: After that was the four-way split EP with Tropiezo/Juventud Crasa, amazing Puerto Rican bands, and No Slogan from here, Chicago.

Alberto: Amazing Puerto Rican band! *[laughter]*

Joey: Then our 7" finally came out: *First to Terrorize*.

MRR: Joey's Puerto Rican.

Joey: I am Puerto Rican…Puerto Rican, not "Port-a Reecan."

Alberto: We also sold a few demos of the live set we did on the Loyola radio show.

Oak: Right now, we're trying to do two splits. One with Hit Me Back, maybe one with Sin Orden? Hmm hmm?

MRR: Maybe… *[laughter]*

Oak: Or if we can't do that, I kinda wanna do just a 7" again.

Alberto: Honestly, splits seem like more fun 'cause you establish a connection with the band and shit.

MRR: So, the recordings are ready for those splits?

Joey: Yep, we're just waiting for offers…Wanna do a split with us?

Alberto: We're waiting for Columbia House to…

Joey: We're going platinum, baby!

Alberto: Platinum or bust. *[laughter]*

Joey: Looks like we're bustin'.

MRR: Maybe wear it as a necklace or something?

Oak: For our next 7", I'm gonna paint it like a clock and wear it like a necklace.

Noe: Nobody's cried yet so this interview can't be over.

Joey: Fight the powers that be!

MRR: You've played Latino Fest the past two years. Do you think this fest is necessary?

All: Yes!

Oak: It was Southkore fest the first time. *[laughter]*

Noe: It's not the name! It's the idea behind the whole fest. Yes, I believe it is extremely important because you get all these fests like the No Way fest and I look at the lineup and it bothers me that there're no Latino bands.

Alberto: No bands of color.

Noe: There's just not a certain ideology that connects the bands to what they're doing. So, it's incredibly important to have Latino fest and to have it every year and to show that all these bands are still around and they're still important.

Oak: For Christ's sake, Los Crudos played [Latino Fest '06] and that was insane!

Alberto: Especially for us, we never grew up seeing them, you know.

Joey: Dudes from Japan flying in, "Hey, Los Crudos is playing today!" Crudos! Samurai!

Noe: Like Oak was saying, for us to see them it was just crazy 'cause we weren't around, you know. We just heard about them and all this stuff about how they sparked this whole blah-blah-blah.

Oak: And they're from Chicago!

Noe: Hometown boys.

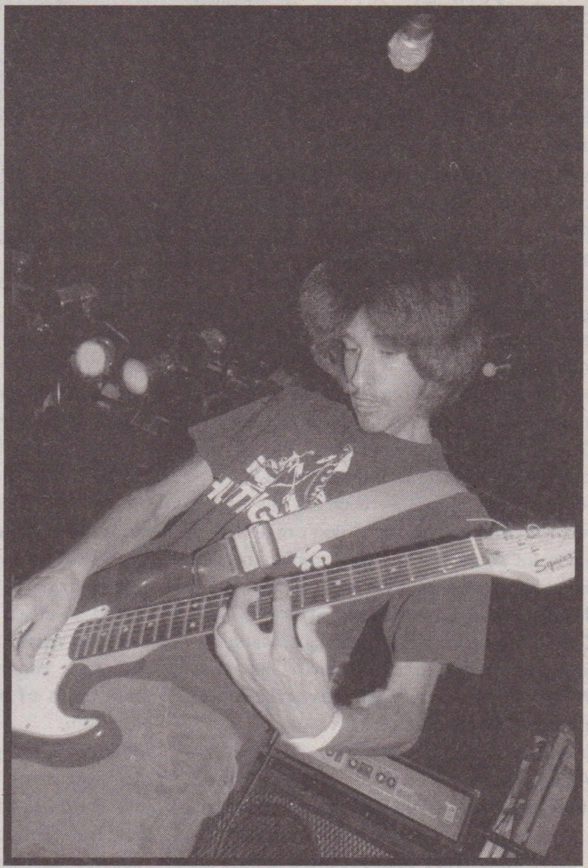
Alberto: 773!

Joey: I think it's about time we did a Latino punk fest 'cause we celebrate every aspect of our culture, Latinos. We celebrate our ancestors, be it the Aztecs or the Mayans or whatever. We celebrate our music, that's indigenous to wherever we live. Puerto Ricans celebrate the salsa and I don't know what the Mexicans do. *[laughter]* I'm Puerto Rican, for Christ's sake!

Noe: Corrido!

Joey: It's about time we show the world that we're here. We're fucking Latin punks. We take this seriously, man!

Noe: If the world doesn't wanna listen then we'll just keep doing it…every year.



Joey: It's a thriving subculture.

Alberto: We're just gonna scream louder, that's all we gotta do.

MRR: Any last comments, shout-outs?

Noe: We have a massive list of shout-outs. We're not gonna even get into it.

MRR: Okay, no shout-outs! Any last words?

Noe: My last words for anyone whoever meets us or anyone like us is don't take yourself too seriously. Have your direction, have what you believe in, but don't be a complete dick about it. Have fun!

Oak: It's all about having fun. Do graffiti!

Alberto: Be positive! PMA.

Alberto: Guatemalans, I'm waiting for you guys to step up! I am the Guatemalan scene.

MRR: Okay, so a Guatemalan, a Mexican, a Puerto Rican, and a Thai walk into a bar and…?

Oak: They say ouch.

Alberto: Why do they say ouch?

Noe: 'Cause they walked into the bar!

Oak: We play a show. I don't know, I couldn't think of anything.

Noe: Let's do this over!

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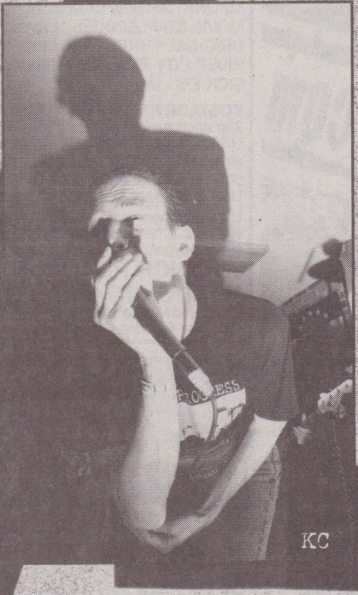
DOUBLE NEGATIVE

Although Double Negative are a relatively new band in terms of releases, Scott makes the argument that they have been a band in the works for a couple of decades and I tend to agree with him. Inspired by the house-show scene in Raleigh, these punk vets were motivated to take part, and they make some incredibly complicated hardcore as a result. They are unbelievable and I couldn't talk to them enough. This interview was conducted at CIUT when they were in Toronto to play Fucked Up's Hidden World *release party back in October of last year.*

Interview by Stephe Perry.

Brian

Scott


KC

Photos on this page: Tony Lynch

Justin

MRR: How long has Double Negative been around?
Justin: Two years.

MRR: How did the band form?
Scott: We'd all been around and played in bands years ago. Kevin had gotten married and was starting to raise a family. Brian had gotten married and moved away. Justin had put himself in self-imposed exile for a couple of years, and I had gone to school and was just at the point where I was never going to play in a band again. The week I got rid of the practice space, I had taken out my guitar and I was cleaning it off when Justin called me up and was like, "Hey. I'm back in town. You wanna hang out?" I was like, "Sure." A couple of weeks later I was like, "These kids are having punk shows we should go check them out." We went and saw Asschapel play in a house, and the energy and the vibe was really fun. It was like a real epiphany. It was all the cool stuff about hardcore without all the bad stuff. Me and Justin went to some more shows and I called Brian. At that time, Brian was living in Durham about 20 miles away and he was going through a divorce, and I was like, "Come on and check this shit out. It's really cool." Kevin…I hadn't seen Kevin in awhile and out of the blue I called him and told him about it, and he was like "Oh, OK, I'll come check it out." So we all met up and it was Government Warning and Black SS and some other Raleigh bands. After that, we were like "We could do this."
Brian: Why don't we put a band together? Let's put a band together solely for the purpose of playing these house parties.
Scott: We never thought we would record. We just thought one practice and…
Justin: No, no, Brain had to go to California the next week.
Brian: That was my post-divorce vacation. So I went and did that, and…
Justin: We picked him up and drove him straight to the practice space. We were like, "We are going to practice," and we got your stuff.
Brian: Welcome back, it's a new beginning. So we actually went back to the practice space and we learned three songs and we were like "This is easy." No, no, no, but we kind of got together and wrote ten songs, and a month later we played.
Justin: We had a few more than that.
Brian: OK, we had twelve songs.

MRR: If I was a kid and I came to a show and I saw you guys play I would be fuckin' floored. It almost seems like…you would be too good to play house shows, but that's probably the scene there, right? But you seem very humble.
Scott: The way I see it now is—before, when I was younger and playing in hardcore bands, we had all the time in the world. Everything was carefree and bands would break up over the most minor crap.
Justin: But now you don't have all the time in the world.
Scott: Yeah, it's like everything matters—time is running out. And we do play our best shows when we are at our practice space.

Getting all together. You know what I mean? Before, when I was in bands, we were trying to make things happen. Even though we said we wanted to make things happen, we wanted people to like us. Now it's like, who cares as long as everybody in the band likes it? That's all that really matters.
Brian: It turns out that people like us. It's like, "What? Why do they like us?" That is something I had to think about for a while.
Scott: Yeah, Brian had trouble with that.
Brian: I couldn't understand it. I didn't get it.
KC: We've all been in other bands. Most of them were not hardcore, but somewhat hardcore-influenced. It was more wanking-off than artistic. I think, now, a lot of that has kind of disappeared.

MRR: You do throw a lot of things in your songs.
Brian: The thing I like about it is that it's kind of simple on the surface but then there are little things that everybody does, like controlled breaks in "Resurfacing." That is something that we all kind of like about it—it's fast and patchy with some kind of weirdness. We can still be pretty weird and it is still within the focus of what we are trying to do.

MRR: There are these phenomenal new bands that have gotten together but feature members from past scenes. I am thinking of bands like Regress from Chicago who feature members of Life Sentence, this band from Scotland called Ruin, or Geriatric Unit from England who feature members of Heresy or Ripcord... Somehow, I got the sense that they have a role model purpose to give kids an idea of how it is done. I don't get that sense from you guys.
Brian: No, not at all.

MRR: I totally get something different from you guys. You guys just want to be a band.
Scott: We have nothing to prove.
Brian: When I was younger and some older dude would come up and go, "You guys don't know what you're doing," I would have been like, "Whatever," so that's the last thing any of us want to do is sit there and be like, "Sit back kid, we're going to show you how it's really done."

MRR: Maybe that's not fair, because I don't think those bands are trying to do that either, but I totally don't get that vibe from this band.
Brian: We are pretty humble about everything.
Justin: Other than Brian, we really don't have anything to cash in on. We have done lots of bands but none that have made it past the North Carolina borders really.
Brian: It's pretty weird to think that at this point in time, that we have done all these things over the years and this is the thing that's gotten us noticed.

MRR: Well, what bands were you in before?
Brian: All right, we'll start with Kevin.
Justin: How long is the tape?
Brian: Do you have another hour?
KC: Subculture, Days Of with Scott, Erectus Monotone... Any others?
Justin: Don't forget the two-show Dixie Automotive.
Brian: Which was Justin, Kevin, and Scott.
KC: And this other band with the same line-up, what was it called? Big Dan.
Justin: During the grunge era.
Brian: And Scott was in a bunch of bands.
Scott: I was in a band in Charlotte when I was 16 with Benji, who went on to form Corrosion of Conformity and sung on the *No Core* tape. Then I moved to Raleigh.
KC: What was that called?
Scott: American Lore. I think we opened up for DOA and crap like that. Then I moved to Raleigh and joined this band called Second Coming, and that was more this Euro-sounding hardcore stuff and we hated our singer, and Kevin was in this highly successful band Subculture.

Photo: Tanner Douglas

Brian: They had a purple van.
Scott: Smokin' van. At the time, me and the other guys were, like, growing our hair out and we're like, "These punks suck." It was getting bad. Around like '85 or '86, the scene sucked. Lots of idiots at shows. We were trying to distance ourselves from that, so we changed our name to Days Of. We were more influenced by a lot of stuff that was going on in DC and we convinced Kevin to quit this really good band to join our band, and it worked out really well. It was a local thing and it was real fun.
Justin: Too big for your britches.
Scott: We were, but we backed it up.
Brian: They definitely had a 'tude.
Scott: We played in this band Big Dan for a practice and then around '89/'90 when the grunge explosion happened, Kevin had Erectus Monotone, who released records on Merge Records. Justin and Brian played in this band Willard... great band.
Justin: If you liked Swervedriver.
Brian: We got compared to bands that we barely heard, like Tree People and Swervedriver and stuff like that.
Scott: But they wouldn't let me in the band because I was a complete freak and wanted to wear leather pants, so I decided to form an extremely... At that point, there was a scene in Chapel Hill starting up with Superchunk and Polvo and all these bands that were big, and I hated everyone of those bands, and I stole Justin away from this seriously popular local band to form this total anti-band called Garbage Man.
Brian: They were good too.
Scott: It was brutal.
Justin: Doing whippets on stage.
Scott: We were totally against what was going on and we kind of imploded, and then a couple of years after that, I started a band with Brian called Daddy and it was pretty much like—a little Discharge, a little Voidoids. It was everything we had listened to.
Brian: It was a real bad attitude.
Scott: It was a complete ball of negativity.
Brian: It ran its course after a few years. A few people wanted to bail for a year, and they all were just too scared to quit.
Scott: They were scared of me.
KC: But there was a really good band that Brain was in called Rabies.
Scott: Yeah, tell your story Brian.
Brian: All right, I will try and make this really brief because it is too much stuff. When I was a young kid, I was in a band called Scared Straight who I keep hearing about now. I am really surprised about how much I keep hearing about it. All these people know about Scared Straight.

MRR: There was a bootleg that came out of Scared Straight material.
Brian: Yeah, something. It just boggles my mind. Anyway, that was the first band. I was 18 years old, living in Southern California, and then I moved out to Raleigh and was in a band called Wwax. That was an OK band that had the guy that ended up forming Merge Records—he formed Superchunk, the Mac McCaughan guy—that was a year. Then there was Willard with Justin.
KC: Don't forget Snake Nation.
Brian: Oh, and after that I was invited to play

with Mike and Woody from C.O.C. on this horrible-sounding well-meaning record called Snake Nation that people kind of like, I guess, now at least.

MRR: Well, I remember reading the Snake Nation review in *MRR* and trying to get a copy of it.

Brian: When it came out, nobody really cared. I was riding the Mike and Woody coattails. Reed wasn't there for whatever reason so they asked me and that was fun. And then there was an instrumental three-piece called Shiny Beast. We were around the same time that Garbage Man was around and Kevin's band Erectus Monotone. That went on too long, but it was a good band. I was in this band Polvo at the end of their career. Their regular drummer quit and they asked me to play with them, so I played with them on their last record and did a tour with them and that was fun. It was fun.

Scott: And then I stole Brian away from Polvo.

Brian: And I was in a band called Patty Duke Syndrome while Shiny Beast was going on because it was like being in Fleetwood Mac relationship-wise, though I ended up joining this band with a guy named Jerry Mcilwean and this other guy who went on to become Ryan Adams, but he was Ryan Adams back then. Not Bryan Adams. I don't want to confuse anybody. But that was a great band.

Scott: This guy has a big name. He is into that alt crap. Kevin's real into him.

Brian: Singer songwriter.

Scott: He is in Gap commercials with Willy Nelson now. He dates Parker Posey and things like that. He is a dishwasher.

Brian: Yeah, I got him a job as a dishwasher. He is extremely talented, an incredible mimic. I am biased. It was a good little band for my stuff. And that totally imploded. We broke up four times, which says something. Anyway, so moving along, Scott stole me away for Daddy and then I was in a band that no one cared about called Siberian that was like the Chameleons. Metal people who were sick of playing metal. And finally, the house party thing happened and we all got together and this band formed. I am leaving out some other stuff but that's too long right there, I think. Justin?

Justin: That's it. Y'all covered it.

Scott: Justin was in Garbage Man and Willard.

Justin: I guess I was in that band, the Rails, too. We did a 7" with the Chrome Cranks.

Brian: And he was in another band called the Step Gods.

Justin: Yeah, but we don't want to talk about that.

Brian: So we have all been in a lot of bands.

Scott: But honestly all that stuff really doesn't matter, what matters is now. I mean, really, the past is past. We might sit around and talk about stupid crap, but there is so much going on now—why waste time on that? It is so silly how kids will come up and they will be like, "What was it like back in the day?" Why should you care? Things are so cool now. It's a whole different vibe, but people really have their acts together. And the people that are involved are really involved. A lot of them mean well, they get stuff done, whereas back in the '80s, we never got any shit done.

Brian: That's not true. It's the same thing.

Scott: It is more instantaneous. With the interweb and stuff it is way more instantaneous.

Brian: But the motivation is kind of the same. "Oh, we should do this stuff. We might as well do it." And then you do it.

Justin: But instantly sending information and money to somebody who lives 5-6,000 miles away from you at any time…

Scott: Really, the only difference between then and now is the whole thing being instant.

Justin: If you wanted to hear a band, you had to wait for their tape to come in the mail for a week and a half.

Scott: You sent a demo tape to somebody in California and maybe you would hear from them, or somebody would take photographs and…

Justin: You'd wait for the film to get developed…

Scott: …and two months down the road you might get these pictures. And now you go home after a show and there is a whole roll of film on the internet and the videos are already on YouTube.

Brian: Everything is a lot more heavily documented and it is easier to document.

Scott: Kids are all about documentation.

KC: You would have to look for a pay phone when you were a kid and now you have a cell phone.

MRR: I wanted to ask you about the name Double Negative. Where did the name come from?

Justin: Scott always chooses the name of whatever band he is in.

Scott: Well, Minor Threat was taken.

Brian: The Exploited was taken.

Scott: I kind of like the idea of it meaning… like when people think Double Negative, they think it's bad. Actually it's a positive thing. Two negatives are a positive.

Justin: It's also a play on names. I mean how many hardcore bands have double or negative in their name?

MRR: Double Negative brings them both together.

Scott: And two of my favorite bands are Double-O and Negative Approach.

Justin: There you go. And also it is easy to make a symbol out of it. We did pre-think that.

Scott: I was trying to think what could kids mark on the walls the fastest.

Justin: Carve into their skin.

Brian: Tattoo each other.

Justin: You see, it instantly and there is an instant recognition.

Scott: It was just something silly at first, but I don't want to be in a band that would be perceived as silly, you know, over-the-hill jokers trying to play hardcore, because sometimes I see hardcore bands—not the ones still together and playing out, I have no problem with that—but you have these bands who, 20 years later, get back together. I am like, "Screw those guys." I mean, no matter if they are cool, I have always hated that. I have always hated reunion bands. I would rather see these guys who played in some kick-ass band in the '80s or '90s do something new. You know what I mean? Even if it is in the same scope or frame of what they were doing before.

Justin: I think about what is going on now. I don't care about what happened 20 years ago. I want to know what is going to happen 20 years from now. I want to see the future. Go, go, go. We are always concerned with what is going on, not caring about "this is where you started and this is where you'll stay."

Brian: We have met some people who are like, "I only listen to music that came out from 1981 to 1983, nothing else." That is what they really like. Well, that's kind of funny.

MRR: Some people are trying to capture the enthusiasm or spirit of the time.

Brian: Or the production value.

Scott: I think the enthusiasm back then was different than it is now.

MRR: Well, I think it is a romantic notion of the time.

Scott: One thing I have noticed is that if you look at any videos of cool shows, here or in North Carolina or wherever, everybody has a look, but if you look at old hardcore shows, there are kids with, like, moustaches and mohawks. It was like oddballs.

Brian: They were freaks.

Scott: You had to be into hardcore to be into hardcore. It really was a challenge. I mean, new wave and punk, it was like—screw that crap. It was just something when I was 16 that I could identify with. It was something that was my own.

Brian: There were a lot more weirdos. Just complete lunatics just walking in off the street. People that you will never see again. You don't really see that quite as much.

Scott: Well, it is more organized. But then it did get to a point where it was big. Like in Raleigh, especially when I had moved there in '83, the scenes were centered around the high schools. There would be ten kids from this high school and ten kids from that high school. And those bands would play with these bands, which is great, but now I just think it is more organized. Does that make sense?

MRR: Yeah. And back to the high school thing, it was survival in some ways because you were the only punks in school so you all stuck together and found out about shows through each other.

Brian: When you met somebody that liked that kind of stuff, you weren't like, "Is he cool enough?" You were like, "Oh, this is cool."

MRR: You were trying to find out about bands. You would trade tapes with each other, but also you would find out about shows through each other. It was a survival network, really.

Scott: 25 years ago, if you were walking down the street and you would see somebody with a Black Flag pin or a homemade Black Flag shirt, you could walk up to that person and have a conversation, because you knew they were on the same level. But now you see someone wearing a Misfits shirt and you are like, "I'm not going to talk to that creep."

Brian: He's probably a dumbass. Even back then I used to write a lot of letters.

Scott: That's how I met Brian.

Brian: Yeah. And I'd be drawing stuff for people. In California, when I was living there, there would be people that would just show up. These guys from Australia just showed up at my parents' house. "Are you Brian?" "Yes." "We read about you in *Maximum Rocknroll*, is there any shows tonight?" "No, but come on in." You would let them in and spend a few days there, and my mom would be like, "How do these people know who you are?"

Scott: Can I tell the Brain story—how I met Brian?

Brian: Sure.

Scott: I had written Brian and he was sending us demo tapes and stuff of all these bands and we were going back and forth with tapes. I did this fanzine and sent it to Brian, and we were getting his stuff, and he was writing for *Maximum Rocknroll* and all that crap. And at the time I was living in the punk house and where all the bands would stay. It would be the party house. One morning at 7:00 in the morning, there was a banging at my door and it was Reed from C.O.C. and he was like, "I've got this band out here and they need a place to stay—their van broke down." I was like, "Oh, man." I had probably gone to bed at like 6:00 a.m. I walk out in the living room and there are all these punks with little mohawks and shaved heads and he was like, "This is NOFX and they need a place to stay." I was like, "Oh, OK." Reed is like, "This is Brain Walsby." I look over and Brian is sitting there in the living room and he is this pudgy Jewish kid with a crew cut. He had extremely short hair. I think I had dreadlocks at the time. I don't remember.

Brian: You had a mohawk.

Scott: I had a mohawk?

Brian: Like a dreaded mohawk in the back.

Scott: No. But I walked out and I was like, "You're not Brain Walsby." And he goes, "Yes, I am." Then I was like, "Wait a minute." I went in the bedroom and I came back with a pen and paper and I said, "Draw something."

Brian: So I did.

Scott: So was like, "OK, you are Brain Walsby." I totally imagined Brian as this…

Brian: Blonde, buff…

Scott: California kid with bleached hair.

Brian: Not the aforementioned pudgy Jewish crew-cut glasses-wearing dork. That well-meaning kid that drew.

Scott: He looked just like the back of the Scared Straight EP.

MRR: I refer to drawings by people who cop that style now as Brian Walsby drawings. People don't know what I am talking about.

KC: They will, as Brian's marketing machine is kicking into motion.

Brian: A couple of years ago, before the band started, if people knew anything about me they would ask me about what it was like to play with Ryan Adams, but now they ask me what it was like to be in Scared Straight, so it has kind of shifted.

Justin: Brian is like, "I was drunk the whole time. I don't remember."

Brian: I was on drugs the entire time. That's how I met Scott. Then I met Kevin maybe a week later. He moved here shortly afterwards. We met Justin a few years later. He was a little younger. He had a little mohawk and I saw him moshing and took a picture of him. Later, I became his friend.

Scott: I saw my picture posted on the side of a Dr. Know flyer and there was this big pit with all these people thrashing and Justin with a little mohawk.

Brian: He was like 8 years old or something.

MRR: You became one of Brian's caricatures.

Justin: I became generic thrasher #5 in Brian's pit drawings.

MRR: Tell me, who are influences on the band? Who would you credit as influences or somebody that you draw on?

Justin: Everything. I mean, I know we might have a certain sound…

MRR: I'm not sure you do, really.

Justin: I don't think we would sound like we do if we hadn't listened to different stuff through the '80s, '90s, and 2000's.

Scott: I think some of the stuff we play sounds like the Unseen, and then I sit back and it really doesn't. I will come to practice and go, "I have got this song…"

MRR: Well, you hear it that way.

Scott: I will listen to the Byrds or Let's Active and that will be a major influence on something like "Looking at the Rats."

Brian: But the way it comes out, it doesn't sound like that. Birthday Party was something I always liked a lot. There are a few things I ripped off, but you couldn't tell.

Justin: I liked a lot of AmRep and Sympathy and Sub Pop and all that stuff, and I'm not ashamed to say it.

Scott: Oh, that grunge thing is coming back big time. It is. We're going to cash in.

Brian: Kevin, what do you think?

KC: The only thing I can really name—I love all kinds of music and I love all kinds of singers—but the only thing I can think of that I really tried to emulate somewhat would be HR, I think. His whole rhythmic thing—I always loved him.
Brian: We have heard way too much about the C.O.C. thing seeing as we knew them.

MRR: I think it is because they are from there.
Brian: There is one song that I really do think sounds like C.O.C. Justin wrote it—he went, "Hey, look what happens when you take two Mike Dean bass lines from *Animosity* and reverse them," and it sounded great.
Justin: That's all they did for "RedneckKK."
Scott: "RedneckKK" is really "Symptom of the Universe" sped up. Everything, it's the whole song.

MRR: This sounds like a ridiculous question in light of that conversation, but because we were talking about influences I was going to ask you—if you had to limit your record collection to five punk releases, what would they be?
Scott: Easy. Discharge *Hear Nothing, See Nothing, Say Nothing*, the Bad Brains *ROIR* cassette, either of the first two Minor Threat 7"s.
Justin: *Damaged*.
Scott: Naw.
KC: *Cows and Beer*.
Scott: The first *Rodney on the ROQ* record was a major influence on my life, and Circle Jerks' *Group Sex*. But then I like a lot of current stuff that is going on. It's almost as good as that.
Brian: For sure. It is hard to pick. You have to do two sets of lists.
Scott: But honestly when *Hear Nothing, See Nothing* came out, I was at a friend's house and he was playing it, and it was like a symphony. I had never heard guitar… I mean, most punk records were badly produced, but it was like a roar. It was amazing. And then he was like, "Oh yeah, I got *Damaged*" and I was like, "Nawww."
Brian: I loved them both, but *Damaged* was the one for me. I didn't get to the second side for about a week. I didn't see them like Scott did before the record came out. I didn't have anything to compare it to. Before that, it was the *Rodney on the ROQ* record that Scott said, because my uncle had it. And then some of the stuff that he said, like Minor Threat and Bad Brains.
Scott: It is kind of funny, because early on I had a friend that had moved from the Baltimore area to go to school where I was living at the time, and he was like, "There are all these bands up where I live. There is this band the Teen Idles. You need to check these bands out." I was like, "Well, how do I get their records?" At that time you couldn't find hardcore records because there weren't hardcore record stores. You could buy stuff from SST and that was kind of it. If you were lucky, you could go to the import bin and try and find something. So he went home when school let out, and I gave him twenty bucks and he sent *Group Sex* and *Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables* and the SOA 7". I was overwhelmed. "This is *it*." It was kind of before fanzines had proliferated. I had a horrible long-distance phone bill thing because all these record companies were people's addresses. Their home addresses. "Oh MacKaye… Beecher Street." I would just call these people up and I would talk to them about what was going on. They were like, "Oh yeah. You need to come up and check out these shows." My parents were really cool. For my sixteenth or seventeenth birthday, I was like "I'm going up to Raleigh to see these bands. Double-O is playing and this band Faith is playing."

MRR: They all played in Raleigh?
Scott: Well, Double-O did, but something happened with Faith and they couldn't play. I think it was my seventeenth birthday and I went to Raleigh, and Raleigh actually had a punk scene. There were fifteen kids, twenty kids. It was the guys that made up No Labels and Corrosion Of Conformity and seeing their first shows. All of a sudden, instead of having five kids, we had twenty kids and they are all nice. It made a difference. I started coming to Raleigh to go to shows, and as soon as I graduated I was like, "See ya." A week after I graduated, I was gone. I moved to Raleigh to be a full-time punker.

MRR: Do Kevin or Justin want to answer the five punk records question?
Scott: Answer it, Justin.
Justin: I don't know. I mean, I am younger than these old farts.

MRR: But don't you have five records that you really love?
Justin: Yeah, but they wouldn't be punk records.
Scott: Hardcore records, hardcore or punk.
Justin: No, it is not that. I just think they will be

the same.
Brian: It's kind of hard narrowing it down, you know.

MRR: I'm not asking you to try and think about it too much. Tell me five records you love.
Justin: If the aliens landed tomorrow and wanted to know what rock 'n' roll was, I would probably give them the Stooges *Funhouse* or… I think if I could see five shows again that would be a lot easier.

MRR: Who?
Justin: Like Cop Shoot Cop at the Fallout Shelter. They destroy any band I have ever seen and I've seen a few. I would say Laughing Hyenas, even though it was the second line-up with "Cat's Cradle" because I don't think anyone can touch John Brannon. I don't know if I can pick five. I mean, every week it would be something different. I could tell you what five records I am listening to now. I like to use them up and move on. There are definitely records that I have listened to over and over throughout.
Brian: Minutemen for me and Kevin.
Justin: The most underrated record is Tales of Terror.
Brian: That's a great one.
Justin: I remember seeing the cover with the guy holding the SG. Me and my friend Tom were probably fourteen at the time, going, "What do you think this sounds like?" "You buy it." "No, you buy it." Tom broke down and bought it, and it just floored me. It sounded like what I thought the music should sound like by the way the cover looked.
Brain: I was really into most of the SST stuff. That was probably just as big if not bigger than the hardcore stuff that I liked. Saccharine Trust, Black Flag, Minutemen.
Scott: Plain Wrap. Painted Willie. Tom Trocolli's Dog. Bl'ast and all that stuff.
Brian: SST would have these showcases. We would go to them. I remember a real pivotal show with Meat Puppets, Hüsker Dü, Minutemen, and Saccharine Trust. $10. And me and some of the guys from Scared Straight were like, "we're there." It was great. So a lot of that stuff was pretty good.

MRR: Kevin, did you want to answer?
KC: Well some of my favorite records are not hardcore at all. Definitely the *Cows and Beer* 7", *Buzz or Howl* EP probably, but then I loved this band the Sneakers. They put out a little gem of a 7" in '76. A lot of the Southern pop people that went on to be Let's Active… Mitch Easter… Also the *Slates* 10" by the Fall. That is fuckin' awesome. All over the map.

MRR: I was going to ask you about some other things. We had started talking about the scene in Raleigh. Can you tell me about some of the bands we should look out for?
Scott: It's funny, because all these bands just recently broke up and then also all these bands are turning into other bands, so…
Justin: We haven't actually heard them, so we can't give them the thumbs up.
Scott: Cross Laws are right now turning into Logic Problem, which is a weird name. And they are also this other band Devour, which are polar opposites. Logic Problem is more straight ahead hardcore like Articles Of Faith and then Devour is almost like more of a Poison Idea kind of English sound. More crunch. More metallic but not metal.
Justin: The sound of the guitar, maybe.
Scott: There is this band Crossed Eyes and they call themselves pop punk, but I think they are punk.
Justin: It is major chord but that is about as close to pop as it is.
Scott: There are these young kids who have this band called the Obtruders and they have gotten really good.
Justin: They are going to be a force to be reckoned with. When they turn nineteen, they are going to be huge.
Scott: Those kids are what are influencing… The older people to them are 22- and 25-year-olds. Those guys are just coming in and wiping out those people. It is just pure energy. If you ever look at any of our MySpace pictures, you will see the same five people going nuts. It's those kids. And they are all nuts. They are super cool guys. There are a whole gang of kids that hang out with them are just great. Who else? There was this band Street Sharks for a while, but they broke up.
Justin: They kind of became Crossed Eyes.
Scott: There is a flux.
Justin: There are lots of cool people that are going to be in lots of cool bands, but which ones make it and which ones don't is yet to be told.
Scott: In the recent… There is a weekly paper in Raleigh that is an entertainment thing…

MRR: Does it actually write about the punk scene?
Scott: Well, it did, and it caused a schism in the scene. What had happened was that some shows were at clubs because they were just too big and after a while there would be bands at houses and the house scene there is just gigantic. Out of control.
Justin: It used to be that bands that were too big for houses would go to clubs, but the Raleigh scene got so that bands that are too big for clubs would play these houses instead. So what if 300 people show up? Just force them to wait in the yard and they would rotate people in and out of the room.
Scott: We played with the Cola Freaks and the Obtruders, and there were 60 people in a room this big but there was a 150 people outside. It was insane. But the local papers started doing articles on it and they interviewed us and so the cops knew where to go. It is not like on MySpace, where they have cops doing a MySpace page figuring out what's going on, but it didn't help that people were shooting off fireworks and just using it to party and get reckless.
Justin: But there wasn't any kind of vandalism. The absolute worst thing that happened was underage drinking. Seriously. No breaking or destroying property.
Scott: It is really funny, because we will go places and people will ask, "What's your scene like?" "Well, it's great, you know. Lots of shows. Maybe 100-150 people a show." They are like, "What about the fights?" There are no fights. That is the best thing about Raleigh, people are into it and they are just enthusiastic when out-of-town bands come, it is this unconscious group effort to make that band happy.
Justin: We want them to say that they want to come back to Raleigh. It's crazy. Annihilation Time played one night and two nights later the Vicious would play. For a while there last summer, I would have to

Photo: Tanner Douglas

decide which three shows would I go to this week so that I will be able to function. It was great.
Scott: The scene in Raleigh is really healthy. It is in a flux. All the bands broke up, but there is this undercurrent with the kids that we're friends with. They are excited about the future projects and we are just as excited as them. There is a practice space where all the bands practice. We're always listening to them across the hall. It's exciting. It's cool. Keep going.

MRR: Kevin, do you write most of the lyrics?
KC: Yeah.

MRR: What are some of the things you sing about?
KC: Quitting my job.

MRR: The ultimate in fantasies.
KC: No, it happened.

MRR: Oh.
KC: That happened about the same time… That was about a year ago the same time that our second wave of songs was coming together. But that went into a bunch of them. Ripping off other band's lyrics a little bit.

MRR: What would be your favorite Double Negative song from a lyrics standpoint and why?
Justin: Be honest, the one that has the least words.
KC: "Retro Abortion" kind of came together pretty good. It's like fighting to get out of the box, which became an image for the cubicle for me. But that is something that Justin came up with.
Justin: It's a Raleigh tradition. You know, the part where the drums sound like and then you make up a phrase.
KC: And he started saying, "back in the box," just totally like in a hair metal way, and it was cool. And then I was thinking about constraints and work and being limited and when you go off on these… I guess when you get into your 30s and stuff, you start a family and you have to make money and are forced into, "What are you going to do?" You have to have some kind of career or whatever. So I worked a bunch of white-collar jobs doing computer shit and being in that world. I really bought it into it. I would try and help the company move ahead and do my best, and you just end up getting screwed. Companies sell out and fire everyone, or you just have people who are trying to impress their boss or whatever, you have idiots who are running the company who you look at and say, "They are not any better than me. Why are they making so much more money?" It all came from being the breadwinner in my family. That was a big motivation for me. Just thinking about how to do that without selling out again.
Scott: But tell him what you did. He quit. He murdered his boss.
Justin: Burned down the building.
Brian: Embezzled all the money. He bankrolled the band afterwards.
KC: I did what a lot of people do. I started my own company and it has been going pretty good for about a year now.

MRR: That's great.
KC: It's like the adult DIY style.

MRR: It's like applying stuff from your punk days.
KC: It's just as relevant for adults, you know.

MRR: When was the album recorded? When did you put it out?
Scott: A year ago.
Justin: Up in Richmond—Brandon and Lauren from No Way totally set it up.
Scott: They are the best… hard working.
Justin: Super hard working. We got up to the studio and they had money budgeted for dinner and had a house for us to stay at. Lance was the perfect engineer rather than a producer. Basically it was like, "All right, do what you do live. I'm going to watch it for a minute. All right, I got it." He did his best to capture that, which is really what we wanted him to do.
Scott: Brandon and Lauren really hooked us up. The folks at No Way Records were an amazing influence on us—their enthusiasm and their persistence on us about getting our act together and do a record with them. Brandon and Lauren are two people I really give props to. And Eric and Brandon from Direct Control, because those guys do it. You look at those guys and you think they are complete losers, wasted all the time, but then they are playing in five bands in one night, they are putting out the best records, they are kicking ass. They are cool people.
Justin: They honestly don't ever have to sleep, which I'm convinced is how they are able to do this.
Scott: Brandon is full-throttle. He is into it. I gotta give him that. He's a great guy. And Lauren… the Richmond people are all really cool. Except for that damn Tony Bitch.
Justin: Yeah, we first recorded this stuff with our friend Jennifer. We always go with her first because she has known us forever, and she comes in and sits in the corner and sets it up and we just go. Then she goes "OK, here." We sent that stuff to him and he said, "It's OK, but I think we can do better." We were like, "What do you have in mind?" And then he just said, "You will be here on this day and you will record and you will come back and mix on this week. You will have this. Get up here. You'll stay here. I'll feed you."
Scott: We really didn't see this band past five shows. When I contacted the other guys in the band and we decided to do this thing, we kind of recorded a few practice tapes on a box, but then we were actually kind of humbled and surprised that anybody even liked it. We were like, "Are you kidding us?" I mean, we were playing with these bands that were smoking. They were just flooring us. They would come up and go, "Oh man, we really like you." We would be like, "What?"
Justin: But that was inspiration.
Brian: Not to look lame.
Justin: They were pulling out all the stops, so we got to pull out every stop. Luckily, Kevin has complete reckless abandon.
Scott: He broke his hand on our ceiling at one of the last house shows in Raleigh.
Justin: He broke his arm skating.

MRR: I was going to ask you about future plans and about taking a break. You sort of started to answer that question…
Justin: It is hard to take a break with everybody going, "Come here. We'll pay for it and put you up." And it's some place you have never been before in your life. It's going to be fun.

Scott: Yeah, it's really hard to turn that down. But we've all been really lucky that our girlfriends/wives are supportive, because they know we would go insane. We would be complete losers and be down. They see that this is a rewarding thing for us.

KC: Yeah, it definitely wouldn't happen without my wife and her mom. It's an extended family thing. We have three kids so it is amazing that we can go out for ten days. She totally held it down.

Scott: My girlfriend knows it makes me happy. If it makes me happy, it makes her happy. That's a good thing.

MRR: But do you have any plans to tour anywhere?

Justin: We can't do it a lot or for a long time, so at this point we are trying to do surgical strikes and go places we haven't been and places we want to go and where it would be feasible to do.

Brian: We are not going to be living in a van for two months. There is no way we could do that.

Scott: Kevin's got kids. Brian is one of the head guys where he works.

Justin: The rest of us have mortgages.

Scott: Yeah. So it is kind of hard for us to do it. If we are going to do it now, we want to do it right and the right way. We want to do it the best.

Justin: The most possible with the least amount of time.

Brian: We have made some mistakes and we have learned from them. Not just in stuff that we have done in past bands, but also in this band. We probably shouldn't do that. "Let's drive to Brandon Florida, and…" I mean, it was great but it was exhausting.

Scott: But we were with Cross Laws and it was really cool.

Justin: I think we all go into it like, "We are going to do something wrong and hopefully do some of the things right, and just don't repeat the wrongs," rather than, "I told you it was going to be…"

Brian: And all four of us are completely different people in a lot of ways, so a lot of the decision-making… sometimes we will decide something like that and then other times it is like, "Let's put all the cards on the table. Everybody has to be happy."

Scott: That's the best thing about this band. Every other band we have been in, we have been stuck playing Wake County, North Carolina. We were lucky to play Charlotte.

Brian: Look where we are now. We're in Canada.

MRR: I really appreciate you taking the time to do this interview. How can people get in touch with the band if they wanted to?

Scott: www.myspace.com/thedoublenegative.

Justin: The other one on MySpace is a jam band and they are jumping on trampolines and stuff. You'll know you are at the wrong one.

Scott: Or the rap band Double Negative. There are four or five, but…

Justin: We're *the* Double Negative.

Scott: For the MySpace address, it's all one word, thedoublenegative. But we are just Double Negative.

Justin: The New and Improved Double Negative.

Brian: Super Double Negative Junior.

Justin: No seriously, Double Negative featuring Kevin Collins.

Brian: Kevin Collins' Double Negative featuring Scott Williams.

Scott: Our other names were going to be Chaotic Enslavement, Morbid Obesity…

Justin: Those are the metal bands we are going to do later.

Brian: Chocolate Crosses.

Scott: That was my favorite name.

Brian: They are sacreligious-ly delicious.

Scott: No, Socialized Medicine. That would freak everybody out. Everybody would fuckin' hate us.

MRR: In the States they would. The doctors up here would hate it too.

Brian: You can't forget Baron Von Cool. Scott has five or six names that he has always had for 25 years that are all really funny.

MRR: That's good though. Some friends of mine keep a book with band names.

Scott: My rap band, Sherlock and Holmes. Or Ribbon and Bose.

BURNT CROSS

The state of the world is not exactly at its best. Politicians and greedy corporate machines are suffocating the little bit of life remaining in our planet and draining it of all purities. Injustice seems to be everywhere, yet most people are content to sit at home and watch the latest reality TV shows. This apathy fuels the fire behind Burnt Cross, a two-piece anarcho-punk band from Brighton, England. The duo formed in 2007, never really expecting much of a reaction. They have since self-released two albums, The Reality of Sacrifice *and* Carcass of Humanity, *and have received an overwhelming response. I recently had the opportunity to talk to Burn Cross's Robert Marriott and get a better insight as to their views on life, music, and where they are headed in the future.*

Interview by Lindsey Ann Lawless

MRR: What are the most important issues that you try to convey in your music?

Robert: The loss of civil liberties has always been something that has concerned us. As an activist, seeing how the police are behaving and the new laws that are constantly coming out to try and silence any sort of protest against the companies that seek profit no matter the cost to fellow humans, animals or the earth, it makes me so angry. They have brought out terrorist laws against people just for leafleting on the streets over here and I know it's just as bad in America. Things like the state database with ID cards soon to be in place really scare me, though not as much as the fact that people seem to be so apathetic about it. We don't want to be seen as a preaching band but I find it hard singing about love or how great it is to be drunk when all this shit is going on.

MRR: You guys write some pretty angry songs. Has having children changed the way you view these issues now?

Robert: Paul has three kids ranging from five months to 17 years, and although that means he can't be as active as myself, he still finds time to get out and do things. His daughter, who is 12, has been out on lots of animal rights demos with us because she's very passionate about animals. It hasn't changed how we view these issues. In fact, not wanting the kids to grow up in this type of consumer capitalist madness makes it even more important to do what we can.

MRR: I know that you and your brother were doing music over 15 years ago. Is the music similar to what you were doing before? Did you always have such strong messages?

Robert: Yeah we were in a band called Active Response, which really was just a teenage punk band that mainly played local shows. Our lyrics and sound were similar to what we are doing now, so not much has changed. This is why we found it fairly easy to do two CDs in the first year of forming. We never released anything in our old band so that's also why we did Burnt Cross. We didn't expect other people to hear what we were doing, and we wanted to have something for ourselves to look back on. The fact that people seemed to like it spurred us on to release it.

MRR: You have a couple 7"s out now; tell us a bit about those.

Robert: We released two 7"s in January and February of this year, thanks to a friend near where I live who liked our song "(S)mother Earth." He has his own record label called Tadpole Records and releases local hardcore/punk bands. He was a bit dubious

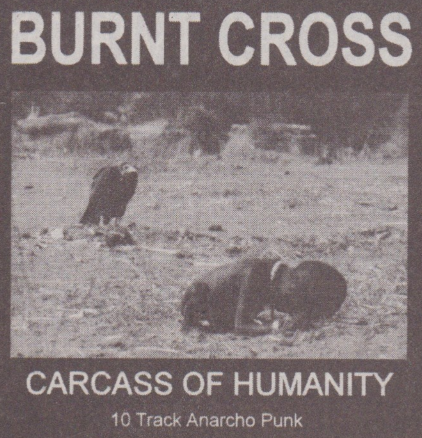
about putting out a single from a band that doesn't gig, so we limited them both to 200 copies due to financial reasons. The first 7" has two tracks and the second has three, all from our *Carcass of Humanity* CD. There seemed to be lots of interest from people who mainly get vinyl wanting us to do this, so we went for it and we're glad to say they are going really fast. In fact, I think they will only be around for about four months!

MRR: For a band that uses a drum machine, you seem to have gotten a really great response. Did this surprise you?
Robert: Ha ha! Yeah, really surprised. Not many bands have done this type of music since the early '80s, so we got lots of interest for that reason, and dare I say some people like the fact that they can hear what we are singing about. I have always loved anarcho-punk more than any other punk music so I wanted to do this type of music somehow, even if it meant doing it with a drum machine. To be honest, we really didn't care what people would think about us using a drum machine. If people don't like it, then it is no loss. I'm not a great guitarist. I rescued a guitar from being thrown away and play the bass by using one guitar string. The only thing we have brought is a £275 eight-track and a cheap microphone. Although we are limited in some ways, we are just happy to have the chance to do something. We are offered gigs all the time but I can't see that happening. Paul lives a good distance from me, which means he'll visit me once a month just to record vocals on one track. We don't really have the time to rehearse and I'm not much of a scene person. I hate pubs and have no desire to be out and about. I'm much happier roaming the woods!

MRR: You also made your songs available as a sliding scale download through Moshpit Tragedy Records. Can you tell us why you decided to do this? How do you feel about the ethos of the label?
Robert: I think that what Moshpit Tragedy is doing is a cool thing and I can already see it's going to catch on. We have always given our music out free. I still have about £400 to make up for what I lost last year giving 250 CDs away. I'm not that bothered though; at least it got us out there a bit. I totally support what they are doing because not everyone can afford to buy CDs all the time. Also, it makes it easier on me not having to get all the CDs out myself. That was hard work for the first few months. Now we can just direct people to Moshpit and they can pay what they want and download our sleeve, which is important to us.

MRR: What are your views on the way music is now easily accessible due to the advent of the internet and MySpace? Do you think it is a positive or negative change?
Robert: Well, sometimes it means there's a lot of real shit going around, but I guess that's fine that people have an outlet now to be heard by people worldwide. For us, it was the only way to get our stuff heard around the world with little effort, and meant we got picked up by four different labels and managed to get on lots of comps too! I still have a fond affection for the old days of tape trading and the sound of a package dropping through your door. This is why we will always release tapes, vinyl, and CDs that we can send to people. I used to be really into that, so to do it with my own music is a dream and to give our music to bands that I used to write to years ago is even better. I've found lots of people on the Internet who I used to get tapes from, so now it's payback time.

MRR: Do you think that anything in the world has changed for the better?
Robert: I don't want to be seen as a negative person. I love life, family, friends, nature, etc. But to be honest, I just despair at the way things are going at the moment. Maybe I'm getting more cynical as I get older, but what's going on in the world is a sorry state of affairs. It just seems to be driven by power and money, which is totally against my nature. I know it has always been that way, but as of late, it seems to be going crazy, as leaders try desperately to secure the dwindling resources of this planet. It really makes me sad sometimes, but I can vent that in my activism and music and try my best to be happy in my personal life.



BURNT CROSS

CARCASS OF HUMANITY

10 Track Anarcho Punk

MRR: What are your plans now? Will you continue to do Burnt Cross, and if so, what goals do you have?
Robert: We have been busy over the last year, so this year will be a bit more chill. I want more time to do things that I put aside whilst doing the music—things like growing my own food, camping, or helping out in animal rescue centers. I reckon we will release another 7" of new songs and another CD at the end of the year. Now we are out there, and I don't have to spend so much time promoting the band or panicking trying to release anything quickly. We have 1000 CDs just about to be put out in independent record shops, so although *Carcass of Humanity* was released four months ago, it's only just getting out there, so that gives us a bit of a break. Hopefully the new 7" will be put out in June on Tadpole Records again and we will do some patches and t-shirts when I can get the money together. We will also be doing a split EP in summer with five other bands and trying to get on as many compilations as possible. Don't hold your breath for gigs, though!

Carcass of Humanity *is available for whatever price you can afford at moshpit-tragedy.com and a cassette version is available from: www.fightthesystem.de*
Stay tuned for more Burnt Cross releases in the upcoming months. You can also check them out at: www.myspace.com/burntcross

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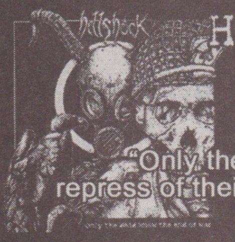

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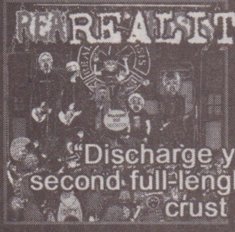

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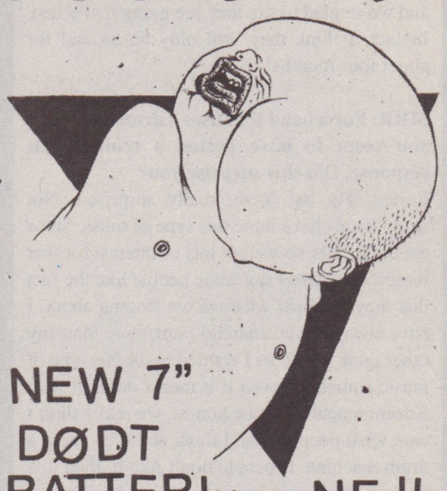

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MASAPUNK

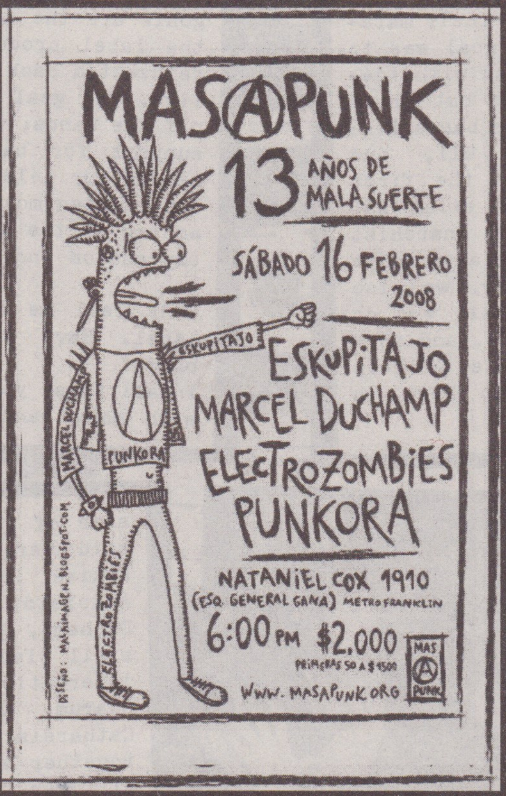
MRR: What's the story of Masapunk?
Well, Masapunk was started in early 1995 with the goal of releasing political punk bands, or more specifically anarchist punk bands. The label was really born out of an anarchist collective. It was very difficult for bands to release their material back then, so our first goal was to help those bands we sympathized with ideologically, and help them put out their material. We began working with bands like Disturbio Menor, Redencion 911, and Silencio Absoluto. Those were the first ones.13 years later we still exist but more now as a collective of anarchist propaganda than music label. We also don't just work with punk bands now, we also work with hip-hop groups, people who do *Trova* music, regular rock bands. and anyone who's involved in or wants to help with the libertarian movement here in Chile.

MRR: What's the relation of the bands and the Label? I would imagine it's not the typical conventional business type.
Yeah, the label only works with political bands, and all the bands are aware that we are a political organization. Through the label we like to promote the ideas of mutual aid, self-sufficiency, cooperatism, and DIY ethics as a mode of working together. We like to preach by example by working with the bands not in a typical conventional way but in a way in which everyone can participate. We don't just put out a record and profit off the sales etc. We always work together with the bands, that's why we say that the bands that participate in Masapunk are part of Masapunk. The decisions are done together. The projects and events are organized together. Our goals are the same, and even the monetary gains the label produces are distributed equally or reinvested back to the label or organizations we like. The goal of Masapunk was never to profit off the bands, we have always been a platform of support for bands or organizations that have needed our help or had something to do with the libertarian movement here, and in that way just adding to the network of support of libertarian expression and the anarchist movement in Chile.

MRR: Tell me about some of the bands on the label. Have you guys only released Chilean bands?
In all these years we've been very lucky to work with many bands both local and International, some of the first bands we put out like we said were, Disturbio Menor who were very active in the Label back then, Silencio Absoluto, Enfermos Terminales, Marcel Duchamp, Redincion 911, and Mal Gobierno who still play to this day. We released various international bands like Los Crudos, Harum Scarum, Vitamina A, Generacion Perdida, Catharsis and many others. We also now work together with many distros and labels from all over Chile in co-releases. It's starting to get really difficult again in an economic aspect to release bands here in Chile. When we first started Masapunk we mostly worked with tapes, which at the time were very cheap to produce, now we mostly work with CDs, which require a lot more money to invest, so for us it's very important to work with other folks in co-releases. With that we also hope to strengthen the ties of unity of the people involved in the libertarian movement, and this music scene that we have always considered, and still consider a space for revolutionary music. Currently we work with bands like Electrozombies, Sin Fronteras, Punkora, Estoy Harto, and many more bands that have something to say, or share from their experiences and their reality.

MRR: Can you talk about a bit about the local punk scene right now in Chile? It seems like in most of Latin America it keeps getting more and more fragmented into factions.Can you explain this?
Well, us at Masapunk and all the bands that participate in the collective have always put to practice the DIY ethic as a way of doing things, and as a mode of working together. There's always going to be people that disagree with you or do things different. We do this because its the most similar on a lower scale to the political ideas of collectivism, mutual aid, self-reliance etc, which are bigger projects linked to social, cultural, and political means. That's our aim as a political organization, we're not interested in just being stuck working with music or the idea of just a music scene. We think everything is connected, We try to make an example on a small scale of something much bigger of what we finally aspire to as anarchists. I don't really know if the punk scene here is divided like in other places, but there is definitely people here interested in the political message in music, political militancy etc, and others who simply are not. There are kids who also have this "no future" mentality and abuse drugs and alcohol, you see this all the time at the shows. We co-exist and in a way respect them since some of them just see this as a vice or a way out, and not dealing with their ugly reality. Or they're just rejecting their society, the establishment and the status quo, because this society gives you little to hope for you know? But it's not something we at Masapunk identify with or are interested in promoting. Self-destruction and nihilism are lifestyles that far too many bands in the past have romanticized, and it's too late for us to be putting up with that shit now. We see it daily at the shows or activities were there's so much senseless violence, apathy, and lack of union-in short it's just not what we're about.

MRR: When did punk start in Chile?
Punk in Chile was born really with out calling itself punk. It began with bands like Pinochet Boys, Zapatilla Rota, Dada', Fiscales Ad Hoc, and others. Some people credit Pinochet Boys with starting that first wave, but kids didn't really called themselves punks. It was mostly middle class kids who traveled abroad and had seen bands and brought back that attitude and style to Chile. There were other great bands like Los KKs, Kaos, Anarkia who recently reunited and 8 Bolas who still play. Those were the pioneers and that's why people respect them, because they were there when nothing else was, and doing that type of music back then was really dangerous in Chile. You must remember the dictatorship was still here.



MRR: Was this '87?
Yeah, Pinochet Boys started in '87 and Fiscales began in '88 and still plays to this day.

MRR: Is Fiscales and 8 Bolas the only bands from that time that still play? I love that 8 Bolas LP!
Yeah pretty much, Fiscales still plays a lot, Los Miserables still play but they're not really from that era-they would come later in the early '90s-recently Politicos Muertos had a reunion also.

MRR: What current bands do you recommend from the scene in Chile now?
Eskupitajo is a great band also Altercado. If you like hardcore, Marcel Duchamp are highly recommended!, I am not gonna lie most of the bands we listen to or identify with are on Masapunk. Malgobierno, Punkora, Elecotrozombies are great.

MRR: I know the label is involved in tons of other stuff like organizing shows, marches and other events, can you tell us about some of the other projects Masapunk is involved in?
Since Masapunk started the members of the collective have always tried to help out in different organizations and projects through the label, We had a space for a brief time called 771 that served as a cultural center. It was a DIY initiative to offer a space for radical artistic, musical, and cultural manifestations. Unfortunately, it was shut down by the local municipality. We also have a virtual platform of support for libertarian organizations called Autogestiona that shares similar political ideologies with web organizations like sindominio.net and such. We also have an editorial branch of Maspaunk called MP that's in charge of releasing written material. There's an

anarchist library called Emma Goldman Center that we volunteer at, but unfortunately we're currently looking to relocate the space. Some of us are more involved in the musical aspect of the label such as booking shows, bringing foreign bands to tour Chile. Some of us play in bands like Punkora, Malgobierno. The Marcel Duchamp kids are very active in the scene. We work with other collectives, like the people of Valparaiso who run the fair of Libertarian Culture there. We also work with the hip hop collective Hip Hoplogia, the Maldita Cruz collective from the city of Santa Cruz, and an infinite small army of people. We always try to keep busy and active.

MRR: I heard that your first release was censored or something? Do you guys have a lot of problems with censorship releasing the bands you do?
Yeah, that was the Disturbio Menor/Silencio Absoluto split. When we took it to the factory to get it duplicated they refused to do it! But tha'ts just one small anecdote of so many other ones we've had. Since we're pretty much still an underground scene-I mean we don't have a massive audience-it's very easy for them to censor us and repress us. State repression can be seen daily here-we live it everyday. For example, the closure of space 771 was an act of political repression. The mayor was from the far right and hated that space,. Cops are always fucking with us at shows, but it's something that not only us at Masapunk suffer. Every cultural manifestation outside of the monopolic legalities that the state controls suffers. Their cultural activities are promoted, defended, and magnified as if they were the only ones, and the rest of the manifestations are repressed especially the radical ones. In that sense we also do not seek the support of the government or their aid or sponsorship for our art, but clearly we have to defend ourselves when we're being repressed and censored. and our culture and way of functioning are in jeopardy.

MRR: Yesterday, March 29, Chile celebrated the day of the "combative youth." I was taken a little by surprise by all the events happening around the city. Can you explain to people, who may not know what happens on this date every year in Chile, the meaning of this day?
Well, the day of combative youth is celebrated every March 29 to honor the lives of the brothers Rafael and Eduardo Vergara Toledo. These young brothers of 18 and 20 years of age were militants of the MIR (revolutionary leftist movement) of Chile, which was a movement that fought against the dictatorship. On March 29, 1985 they were murdered by the local military police. They were murdered because they were youth leaders and were successful organizing a lot of people. So the murder of these two brothers is when this commemoration was born. Thousands of youth pour into the streets to show their discontent and there are direct actions all over the city. Every year the media tries to portray this day as a day of delinquency, of senseless property destruction. They don't care to analyze the real symbolism of this day. It's a celebration of two lives that were killed for fighting the dictatorship-a dictatorship that today all of the country recognizes as a horrific time in Chilean history. Nonetheless the people who fought against this dictatorship and were slaughtered are not respected, so in that sense it's very important for us to celebrate this date, because the media and the government continues to devalue these people that fought against Pinochet. All you see on the news is the violence and the discontent of the youth, but none of them question why we celebrate this date every year, the same with September 11.

MRR: I would imagine there is still at least a small sector of the population that still supports the dictatorship.
Yeah, of course there is still a sector of the country that supports Pinochet. What I refer to is when you speak about the violations of human rights, the tortures, disappeared, murders, etc. Currently the parties of the right have dedicated themselves to try to clean their image and speak against some of the things that have been already proven-the violations on human rights have been proven, the tortures have been proven,the murders have been proven, so some of those people have pretended to stop defending the dictatorship of Pinochet in order to look good to a voting public. Sure there are still assholes who defend the hard hand of

violence and repression at the levels that existed back then and they're not ashamed of that, and will always continue to defend him. The bourgeoisie, the empresarios, the ultra right. and the anti marxist will never change.

MRR: Theres still alot of people that dont know what happend here in '73 and how Pinochet ascended to power, especially in the US, can you explain maybe to some of the people reading what happened here on September 11, 1973?
Well in short, in Chile existed a populist government that was elected democratically. The president was Salvador Allende. His program of popular labor and reforms were backed by members of the radical left. Unfortunately, the institutionalization of this government collided with the populist energy and the interests of people who supported him. The bureaucratization of the government slowed down the process of the promised reforms. The people wanted to change these programs offered immediately. The people wanted liberty, equality, and they wanted it now. This brought on a political imbalance of what the people wanted, what many popular organizations that had worked with the government wanted, and all the people who had supported him directly and indirectly wanted, combined with the economic boycott of the right and the business community organized against him,eventually weakend the Allende government. This culminated with a US backed coup d'etat led by a military junta headed by General Agusto Pinochet. What came next was 17 years of terrorism, tortures, martial law, thousands disappeared, human rights violations, repression, censorship, etc .This lasted until pseudo democracy returned in 1990. Now this doesn't mean what we have now is democracy. What we have now is something that was agreed on by the people in power. Pinochet was a political figure right up almost 'til his death. He was in congress for many years, till this day you can see these murderers and torturers walking free in the streets. Murderers who were part of the secret police, etc. Some of them still participate in government with the economy and the management of the country.

MRR: I think a lot of people from the left had high hopes with the current president of Chile considering her past and backround (was tortured by the Pinochet government and is a socialist) What is the current political situation now in Chile, and Masapunk's position as anarchists towards this present so called progressive government?
The current president Michelle Bachelet, the succesor of Ricardo Lagos, Eduardo Frei, Patricio Aylwin, etc follows the same political line of all the party and presidents that came before her. There has been no real change. It follows the same capitalist model that Ricardo Lagos and Eduardo Frei had when they sold a chunk of this country. The same problems are still present today-the problem of the *Mapuche* is still present, the privatization of the hydroelectrics, the sale of Chilean lands, in short none of the governments since the dictatorship have brought on real change. I don't mean to minimize the change that happens when you come from a fascist dictatorship to a pseudo democratic govenrment, but there are still tortures in the police barracks, widespread political repression, censorship towards any expression of popular discontent, so in that sense things really haven't changed that much.

MRR: You mentioned the *Mapuche* people-what is the current situation of the *Mapuche* in Chile?
The *Mapuche* and other indigenous people of this country, or this piece of land that now is a country, have been mistreated by the Chilean government all through their history. We as anarchists have of course many differences with the *Mapuche*, like the sexism that exists within their culture or the possibility of the idea of a *Mapuche* nation. What we respect and defend is the self-determination of the indigenous to decide for themselves, defend themselves, the right to their land, their own laws and ways of organization. The Chilean government response to the *Mapuche* autonomy has been to take whatever little land they got, massive repression. and even killing them. The indigenous community is disappearing very rapidly from this country, and soon there will be none left.

MRR: I am Peruvian and I noticed in the week and a half I've been here the tension between Peruvians and Chileans that still exists. Outside of the activist and punk bubbles I have definitely felt racism and xenophobia because I am Peruvian, but not just Peruvians also Bolivians too, Curiously enough you also notice the other parallel of how Chileans treat Argentinean tourists or Uruguayan tourists.

Yes, this is unfortunately true. In Chile there is a big Peruvian community and certain people have dedicated themselves to shifting the focus of unempolyment and blaming immigrants for this problem. This is a strategy many countries use, and Chile is no exception. Its very easy to do this to Peruvians since there are so many of them, and also to Bolivians. As far as Argentineans, Chileans have always felt inferior towards Argentineans and Uruguayans. I think Chileans feel intimidated towards them because of their position of class and wealth. Argentineans are supposedly wealthier, and are white, so thus Argentinean tourists get treated different than Peruvians, and the same goes with Uruguayans. Peruvian and Bolivian immigrants come here from a country with a higher level of poverty and have different facial and ethnic characteristics. The campaign of the ultra-right and the neo Nazi groups has planted the idea that the problem of unemployment in Chile is the fault Peruvians. It has become very hard for Peruvians to live here, when in reality all the people in the world have the right to migrate anywhere to find a way to survive and live a decent live, and just how ther'es Peruvians here, there's Chileans in Peru. I think the subject of xenophobia here has also been magnified by the media because in the border city of Arica, Peruvians and Chileans live happily side by side, so I do think that some people have an interest to keep this perception towards immigrants going that makes people think immigrants are the problem of unemployment and poverty. In reality unemployment is a problem of the economy and capitalism.

MRR: Is there a big interest in bands from outside of Chile to come to play here?

Yeah. I think there's a big interest in bands to come here more than before. We have a bigger scene than most countries in South America, and because of that many bands come through. Bands like Acidos Populares from Argentina, Puagh and Asto Pituak from Spain, Eranztun from the Basque Country, Puntas de Acero from Argentina. In the past, we have done shows for Apatia No from Venezuela, and also Los Dolares and Doña Maldad from Caracas, Generacion Perdida and Autonomia from Peru, Sin Dios, and many other bands, I think it has to do with the strong network of DIY contacts that exists, not just in Latin America but all over the world. DIY is worldwide. So I think there is a big interest for bands to come here and tour. For us, we wish there were no borders and all the bands that wanted to visit us could. We invite and welcome them all!

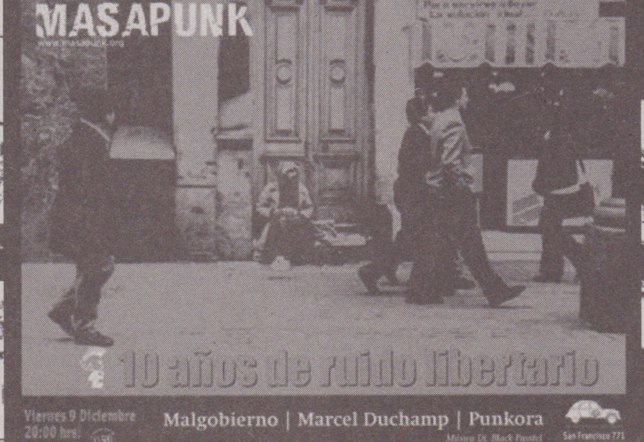
MRR: What's coming up for Masapunk?

We recently celebrated our ten years of existence with a show. Mal Gobierno, Eskupitajo, Punkora and Marcel Duchamp played. Right now, we're in the middle of releasing various musical projects and have also written material. Sometimes it's slow because it gets tiresome to do this all these years-activism, shows, putting out bands etc. Sometimes people get jaded. You notice it sometimes at shows. Shows have been kinda slow, and the attendance sometimes is not like it used to be, but also in general anarcho punk is not as trendy anymore. In 2001 it was very much trendy, and shows were packed, but after that boom of political bands was over, only the true ones with continuity and convictions stayed. We are always going to continue doing this whether it is trendy or not, and keep doing things in the same manner.

MRR: Last words? How can people get a hold of Masapunk?

First, thanks to you for the interview. If anyone wants to know more about Masapunk, we have a website at www.masapunk.org. A list of our contacts are there, and all of our activities, links to the bands, and the organizations we work with. Also we have a fotolog page at www.fotolog.com/distromasapunk. Anyone who wants to contact us and exchange ideas, we always want to know about other realities or bands that want to come play here can just contact us. Thank you and Salud!

MRR: Salud!



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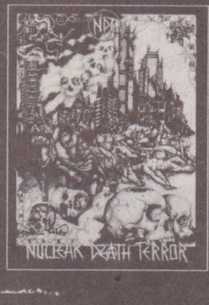

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THE UNLOVABLES

Pop punk has been around for a long time now. There have some great, truly innovative bands, and there have been Ramones rip-offs, not to mention Queers rip-offs, Screeching Weasel rip-offs, and so on and so on. And while it's now over ten years since every other band was trying to be Green Day, there's still a devoted following that plays the hell out of their Mutant Pop 7"s, and it has something to do with bands like The Unlovables. For all the bands that are recycling their record collection (and I'm talking all of punk rock—just what makes your *D-beats innovative, Mr. Typical Hardcore guy?), The Unlovables take a familiar sound and actually put some new spins on it, making you "Fall in love again—for the first time."*

Interview by Joe Evans III, pictures by Jon Vafiadis.

Hallie – Vocals, Bass
Frank – Guitar
Mike – Drums

MRR: Frank, when did you visit the *Playboy* Mansion?

Frank: I was kidnapped by a Playmate. This is a setup! No, when I was a kid, my parents took me to the Playboy Club. I think I was about eight years old, and I tried to run away with a couple of Playmates but my parents found me. But I have a picture to prove it.

Hallie: We've got to put that picture on MySpace. It's a classic.

Frank: It wasn't the real Playboy Club, it was the New Jersey version.

Mike: They were all over, weren't they?

Frank: Four or five, Atlantic City…

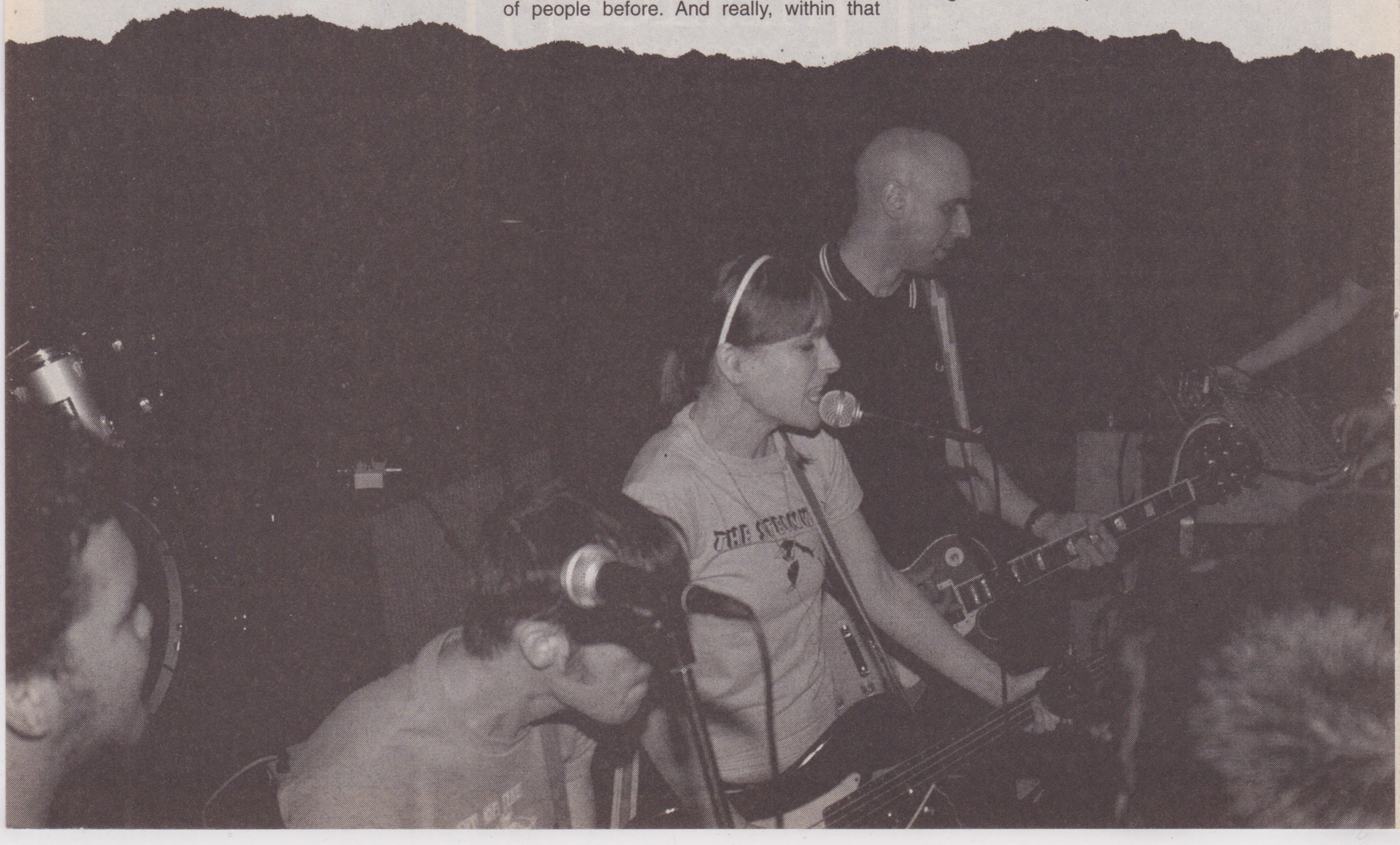
Mike: I know Joe Jackson's first paying gig was the house piano player at the Playboy Club in Portsmouth, England.

MRR: Hallie, what was it like transitioning from the Hissyfits to the Unlovables?

Hallie: I started playing in the Hissyfits and the Unlovables around the same time, which was weird because my whole life I'd thought, "Wouldn't it be so cool to be in a band?" and my whole life did nothing about it. Then, well into my 20s, I finally joined the Hissyfits, never having played bass in front of people before. And really, within that same couple of months, Mikey and Frank and I got together and started doing the Unlovables. Initially I thought that I'd do some of my songs with the Hissyfits with Holly (Jacobs). I think that was part of my reason for wanting to join, because I was writing these songs, and thought maybe that would work out. Holly's songs were so different from mine that it was like the band had multiple personality disorder; her stuff was so angry, and I think my songs were happier and even more bubble-gum-y back then. We played this CMJ show and it was hilarious because she'd sing about something totally angry, then I'd get up there to do one of my songs that were like the Banana Splits. We laughed about it and both agreed it was a terrible idea. But then these guys had contacted me about doing the Unlovables, so I was like, "OK, I'll have a separate band for doing my own shit."

MRR: So everyone works jobs that aren't typical nine-to-fives; Frank, you were a food critic?

Frank: Yes, I was; I still technically am, I guess. I just kinda fell into that through working boring office jobs, and the only thing I could do to pass the time was write



about what I ate for lunch. People started to like what I was writing so I actually got hired by a couple of magazines like *Time Out New York*. And I personal train too.

Mike: Frank's going to start training me. He's going to teach me how to drink a lot of beer, and not gain the weight.

Frank: He's down to about 40 McNuggets a day.

MRR: Mike, you do studio work?

Mike: Yeah, my Dad owns a studio and I work there. We work for a company that owns a lot of masters and people order different songs from them, and I just put the songs together and send them out to these other companies.

MRR: And Hallie, you were a professional mermaid?

Hallie: I was, I worked at this club called The Coral Room. The shtick was that they had this huge thousand-gallon fish tank behind the bar, and they had live performers dressed as mermaids that would perform under the water. When I first started working there, it was super fun—I had these fabulous costumes and I had to learn to hold my breath for a really long time, and the woman who trained me is this woman Julie Atlas who is like the darling of the downtown performance arts scene. So I would dress in this mermaid costume and perform underwater, and lots of crazy things would happen, as you would imagine. I got my tail caught on a piece of coral once, and couldn't make it to the surface to breath, and was worried that I was going to have to take my tail off, which I didn't wear anything underneath it, but luckily I got it unattached. It was a really awesome job. It was like the only cabaret/burlesque kind of thing that I've ever really done. I really loved it. It was cool, aside from having to be underwater and having to be in the mermaid costume, I could pretty much do whatever I wanted. I had artistic/creative freedom, it was cool.

MRR: Do you find that having a work schedule like that, outside of a nine-to-five, is accommodating to being in a band and works for you, or just burns you out that much faster?

Hallie: I feel like I'd be better off working a nine-to-five, because band stuff always needs to happen at night. At least these guys are generally free at night, so that's when we practice, obviously shows happen at night. That was why I needed to quit the Hissyfits, because I was trying to act in a show at night, and then play in two bands, so I'd have my entire day free and then be triple booked at night, and it would become a nightmare. But I guess with the jobs I work, it probably works out better for taking time off for touring, and obviously because we have more non-conventional jobs we're able to have more flexibility on our side.

Mike: I essentially make my own hours, so if we need to practice at four or five in the afternoon, I can start working at six in the morning and just get my eight hours in before I have to leave for rehearsal, or make it up on weekends. I like having this job because I can accommodate band stuff, and other things, better than I could with a nine-to-five.

Hallie: We could never say "Oh, let's practice every Thursday," because none of us know where we're going to be next Thursday. Our lives aren't regular in that way, so it works out in that way too.

MRR: Hallie, what movie were you in?

Hallie: I was in an awesome movie called *I'll Come Running*. It'll be out sometime this year. It had some really cool actors in it, this girl Melanie Diaz that was in *Lords of Dogtown*, and Victor Vargas. I got to go down to Austin and shoot for two weeks and it was really cool. The movie took place part in Denmark, and part in Texas, and my character was only in the Denmark part, but it meant that when I was down there a lot of the cast and crew were all from Denmark. That part was just incredible—it was all these insane Danish people and all these out-of-their-mind Texans, everybody hanging out, it was really cool. Yeah, I don't know if it'll be coming to a theater near you [laughing], but it'll be coming out in some format.

MRR: How much of your diet consists of candy?

Hallie: A good, shocking amount. Like, I shouldn't be sitting here talking to you, my body should be entirely preserved, I should have taken a jelly form [laughing]. I eat a lot of candy. But you know, I eat cookies and brownies, too.

MRR: Which technically has milk, and eggs in them.

Hallie: Yeah, I eat a lot of sugar. But I don't have any other vices, that's the thing, I don't drink and I don't smoke, and I don't do drugs. Everyone just has that horrible thing that they do, and it's so ridiculous that mine's my sugar intake, but that's about as rebellious as I get [laughs].

MRR: Two-part question: How many members have you gone through, and which one has gone on to be the most successful professional gambler?

Frank: I didn't know where you were going with that one…

Hallie: I don't know, Frank?

Frank: There were four. I think there's only one professional gambler. I don't know if I can name him, in case there's anybody looking for him.

Mike: His name was C. Fargis. No wait, that's too obvious, "Chris F." Just cut that part out.

Frank: Yeah, that would be Chris Fargis.

Mike: Maybe… possibly… there *may* be others.

Hallie: Chris Fargis was a gambler, and it was actually kind of cool because the tour he went on with us, we would get to the place where we were staying that night and unroll our sleeping bags, and he'd go hop in the van and go find a game, and basically make a ridiculous amount of money. He was the only one of us that was technically able to keep on working while we were on tour.

Mike: We ate a lot of steak on that tour.

Hallie: Yeah, he would take us out! He looked so innocent; you could totally understand why he would show up to these poker games and totally just *rob* these people of their money. It was funny though, because we were touring the western half of the country and there's so many casinos and we'd be driving on our way to the next show, and we'd pass some huge casino and you'd just see his eyes glaze over like we were passing Disneyland, it would be so hard for him not to stop because he had dollar signs in his eyes.

MRR: Hallie, how come you don't just write 27th-generation watered-down Riverdales songs?

Hallie: [Paused/smiling] I don't know…

Mike: Because we don't do boring shit like that!

Hallie: It's hard for me to have perspective on what my songs sound like, in comparison to that. My songs are straightforward, but it's hard for me to say. I think my songs are straightforward, but maybe in a different way? I mean, I'm a girl, so right off the bat it's not going to sound the same, because it's not like I can do a Ben Weasel impression. But you know, I guess because I grew up being a singer, and not necessarily listening to punk rock but listening to lots of different kinds of music, I guess I just like melodies that are a little more complicated. I like listening to simple melodies, but when I write stuff it just tends to be more complicated and more flowery, just because I grew up listening to a really different variety of stuff.

MRR: Do you find it harder writing songs if you're single, versus if you're in a steady relationship?

Hallie: Relationships *kill* songwriting. Unless they're turbulent. Turbulent relationships are awesome for songwriting.

Mike: I agree; relationships kill songwriting.

Hallie: You can write all kinds of resentful songs about how you're being mistreated or you're misunderstood, but functioning, healthy relationships? Ugh, they're horrible! I haven't written a song in like so long, you've really got to have something, like an axe to grind in order to write like a really good song!

Mike: I feel the same way; relationships kill. You've got to find a girl to have a big crush on, and then you write more songs. Then move on to the next big crush.

MRR: I've noticed a lot of your newer songs focus on "relationships" that aren't necessarily "boyfriend/girlfriend."

Hallie: I think because I had previously written songs that weren't about relationships, but because *Crush, Boyfriend, Heartbreak* was this concept album; they didn't make it on to that. So this album has songs that I'd written back then that didn't make it onto that, and then other songs that I'd just written about different things, probably because I was in a healthy relationship and had to turn to other sources of material.

MRR: So there's a song on a Crafty Records compilation that's very "Jersey-centric." Is this supposed to provide reparation for any other song?

Hallie: I started writing it because I was actually dating a boy from New Jersey, and I thought it'd be a funny idea for a song. He was actually the only guy I knew with a car, and I'd actually joked to myself inside my brain about the differences between dating a guy from New Jersey and a slacker guy from Brooklyn; slacker guys from New Jersey are different from slacker guys from New York, it's a different brand of dude. But then yeah, it was kinda funny that everyone got so bent out of shape about that Jersey comment in "If You Were Here," so I guess it did feel good to write a little ode to Jersey as an apology. Although I really had not meant that line in a bad way, I really only meant that it was a small state, I didn't mean that it was somehow culturally insignificant, or not a state that we should respect. I just meant that it was geographically small.

Frank: Revisionist history. She's had five years to think about that one.

Hallie: It's not true! [laughing]

Mike: She almost didn't let me into the band because I'm from New Jersey.

Hallie: Hopefully some people from New Jersey can forgive me.

MRR: I was a little curious about where the first Unlovables show took place anyway.

Mike: [Giggling] Was it in New Jersey?

Hallie: Why, what Jersey show would we have played earlier?

MRR: According to the website, the first show was in South Amboy.

Hallie: Oh, no, that was just when I first started keeping track. I think that show was actually two years after we'd formed as a band.

Frank: I think our first official show was at our friends' loft. It was like an art gallery opening, open-studio kind of thing.

MRR: Well that's very "convenient." [Everyone laughing] Mike, does it get tough having to come into New York City on such a regular basis?

Mike: It depends on how many CDs and DVDs were released that week. No, I do it three or four times a week at this point, so it's nothing now. It never really was. It's a short train ride.

Hallie: That also implies that we practice a lot, but we don't. So if Mike's always coming into New York City, it's not because of the Unlovables.

Mike: There were busier times, there were less busy times. Even before the Unlovables there was Dirt Bike Annie, which I was coming in twice a week for rehearsal, and usually at least one other time for a show, I was used to coming in a lot anyway. "The time has come!" [Starts dancing]

MRR: What's the best place to go for two punks on a date in New York City?

Mike: It's going to be on the 27th of the month.

Frank: It'll probably be a record release show for the Unlovables. A lot of romance happens in the audience at our shows, right?

Hallie: You've got to go shopping at Generation Records, it's like the only punk rock record store left in the city.

Frank: It's the only one. And I usually go to Trash and Vaudeville for my bondage pants. I can't go on a date without them.

Mike: You've got to hang out at Saint Marks Place for at least two or three hours. You can go to pop punk night on Thursday nights at Lost and Found in Brooklyn.

Frank: Yeah that's the place to be, because you've got skeeball, you've got a free hot dog with every drink, there's more pop punk girls than I've ever seen at any show in my life possibly.

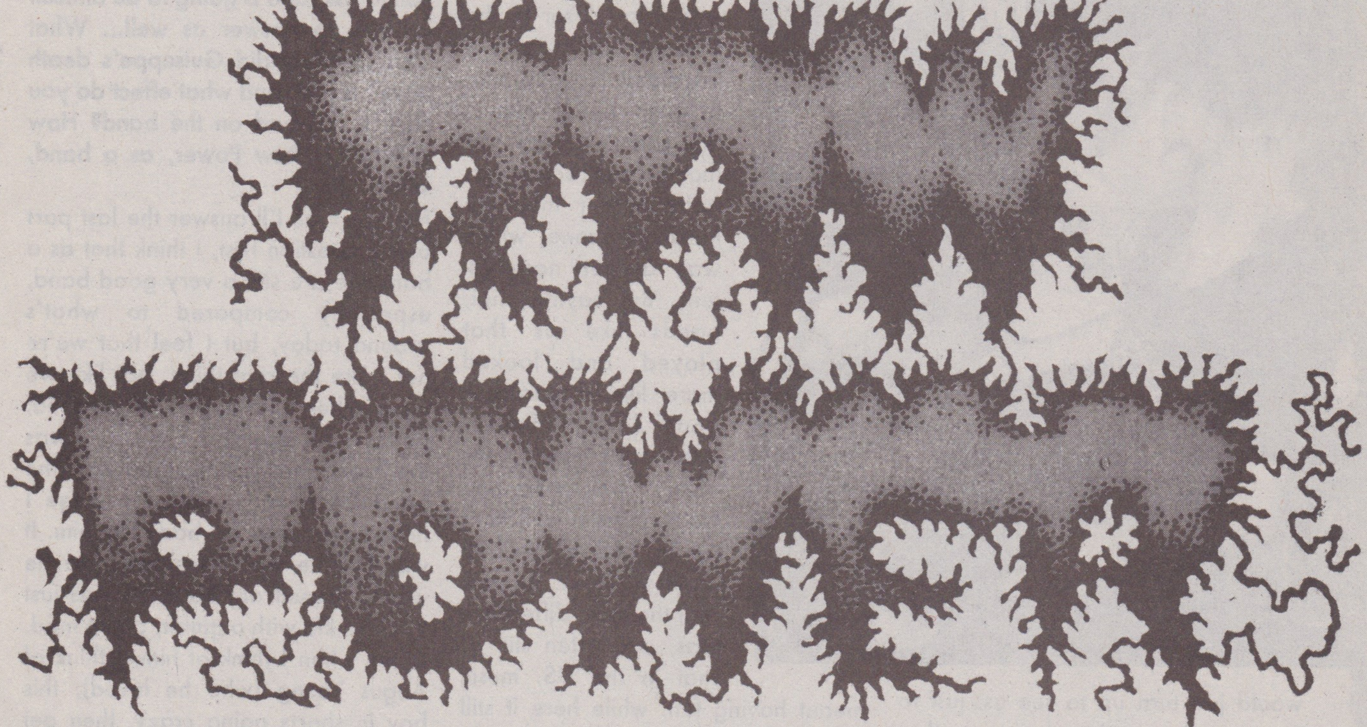
Hallie: You've got to go strolling down the Bowery where the Ramones hung out, even though it's totally different now, you'd have to at least go. And they renamed it Joey Ramone Way, right? You'd have to see Joey Ramone Way.

Frank: Hotel Astoria.

Mike: For a nightcap.

www.theunlovables.com
www.myspace.com/theunlovables

Twenty years after I first stumbled across Raw Power, thanks to Marvin and Autonomy Records, listening to Screams From The Gutter still sends shivers down my spine. As a band, they've seen and done it all: they toured the US when it was unheard of for European bands to do so, they helped pioneer crossover and weathered the resulting storm, they've survived the death of a founding member, and throughout it all, they've stuck to their guns and kept on doing what they do best—playing hardcore.. Three years after I last spoke to Mauro, I thought it was about time that we caught up again as Raw Power prepares to release a new retrospective on Beer City and gear themselves up for a Summer US tour. Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, I give you Raw Power... Interview by Tim Mass Movement.



MRR: After nearly twenty-seven years of Raw Power, what do you remember most about the early days of the band? How difficult was it rehearsing, recording, and playing shows in Italy and Europe during the early '80s?

Mauro: Well, right from the beginning, for us the biggest problem was that I lived in London and the rest of the band lived here in Italy, so it was difficult rehearsing, but my brother used to send me cassettes with the new songs and I would write the lyrics and send them back. This is how we did the first songs. As for playing, here in Italy we always had lots of problems because right from the start we decided that we would sing in English, and back in the '80s you were allowed only to play here if you were a political band and you sang in Italian, never mind the fact that all the places around at the time were mainly squats—or, as they call them here, social centers—and the PA's were such crap that you couldn't understand a word anyway, whether it was Italian, English, or Japanese. That is why we turned our attention abroad right from the beginning, as there they didn't care about this shit and we were able to go out there and show them what we could do musically. Nothing else mattered to us, because at the end of the day that is what we were and are: a hardcore band, not a political party.

MRR: How does it make you feel when people refer to you as being "icons" or one of the "seminal" European bands of the '80s? Do you ever feel like people expect more from the band (given Raw Power's near "legendary" status) than you can actually deliver? Why?

Mauro: It makes me feel very proud. Very old too, but definitely very proud and I often think to myself that it is all very silly because we haven't done anything special. All we did was what we liked doing, and we had a lot of fun doing it, and if we managed, as I hope, to give people some enjoyment, well, that makes me proud and also makes me happy. I think generally, people that don't know Raw Power expect very little, because they see us just as some very ordinary, quiet, calm people. Once we get up on stage, we change, and this is when they think, "shit, these guys aren't that bad..." While people that know us, hopefully they think that even after all these years we still have what it takes up there. When I start hearing people complain about our set, then that'll be the time to call it a day, but so far, judging by the last shows we have done here and the last tour we did last summer on the West Coast, I don't think that time has come yet.

MRR: Why do you think the US picked up and latched on to Raw Power before Europe did? How did you feel being a European band that built its reputation in the US?

Mauro: Because our sound and approach to hardcore music was very much in the American style. Back when we started, there weren't that many European bands touring the US (never mind Italian bands, we were the first) so it definitely helped. A lot of people

would just turn up to see us, just to see people coming from another country.

MRR: Do you think that as a band you're still more established and well known in America than you are in Europe? Why?

Mauro: I think, yes, people tend to know Raw Power more in the US than in Europe. Or maybe not, maybe the right way to put it is that Americans follow us more than Europeans do. Recently, we have witnessed that anywhere we go in Italy or Europe, a lot of kids know the band or have at least heard of it, but don't come out to see us play; when we play in the States, people do come out to the shows.

MRR: Being a European band that's spent a long time in the US, how do you think the scenes differ? What do you think are main differences between the US and European punk and hardcore scenes?

Mauro: When we started, the two were completely different—you had a scene and we just had groups of people trying to put a scene together. In Europe, it was a lot closer to the US, with countries like Germany, Holland, and Belgium being almost the same, it was just that the punk scene was a lot bigger than the hardcore scene, which was almost non-existent. But saying that, bands like us that played and looked more like a hardcore band (and definitely not a punk band) were always welcomed and treated very well and we just had really good times all over. I think that the main difference was, and often still is, that in the US, music meant having fun, while here it still meant being involved in a movement, most of the time a political one. The US was more lighthearted, you were there to play and people would just respond by having fun and trying to make us as comfortable as they could.

MRR: What do you attribute the band's longevity to? With so many bands being around for only a couple of years at most, how has Raw Power managed to survive for over a quarter of a century?

Mauro: The fact that we are very, very irresponsible and don't want to admit the fact that we are getting old and should retire, but unfortunately this is like an illness, we have it in ourselves and we can't seem to be able to cure it, we have to keep on doing it, despite everything else that happens around us.

MRR: Has their ever been a time when you thought that Raw Power was going to end? What happened?

Mauro: Several times when we lost one member or another of the band, but then we found a replacement and there we were, on the road again.

MRR: This is kind of a difficult question to ask, and is going to be difficult for you to answer as well... What kind of effect did Guiseppe's death have on you, and what effect do you think it has had on the band? How different is Raw Power, as a band, without him?

Mauro: Well I'll answer the last part of the question first, I think that as a band we are still a very good band, especially compared to what's around today, but I feel that we're not quite the real thing, not like we were when Giuseppe was around, because he was Raw Power. He was the band—he just worked for the band 24 hours a day. On stage I have never seen anybody like him. It was like he was transfixed, like he wasn't himself anymore, he was just this little kid with a guitar, going mad. Often when I think of him, I think of Angus Young (who he loved), this boy in shorts going crazy, then get off the stage and be the sweetest person you could think of. So when he decided to leave us all here in the shit, I told the rest of the boys that the band was no more, but then, after a month or so I decided that I missed it to much, that while it was sometime a pain when my brother was around, it was a part of me that was missing so I decided that we had to give it a try for us and also to let people know what Giuseppe had worked so hard for, for so many years wasn't going to waste. But the only condition right from the beginning was that the minute we thought, or people told us, that we were rubbish then we would just stop.

MRR: How does it make you feel when people always seem to refer to *Screams From The Gutter* as being your best record? Do you think it is your best record? Why do you think it has had such an incredible impact

on the hardcore scene?

Mauro: I think that they *are right*. Not only is it *our* best record, but one of the best *ever*. I like some of the other records too, not that I have listened to them much, but I know that some of the songs here and there are good, but I think that *Screams* is very special and the reason that people like it and remember it in spite of everything else is just that, that it is a very special record. The songs are rough, immediate, in your face, and yet very simple. There's nothing false about them you can just feel the energy coming from the vinyl, so even today when someone tells me that, I can't do anything else but agree with them, and thank them.

MRR: Raw Power is also regarded as being one of the first crossover bands—that is, one of the first hardcore bands to start using thrash-metal influences in their sound. How do you feel about crossover and metal now? Do you think that Raw Power still have elements of heavy metal within your sound? Why do you think so many punks were so opposed to bands incorporating metal into their sound?

Mauro: When we did that, it was mostly because we had a guitarist that was into metal, so it was only natural that he would try and stick some metal in our songs. The fight was always to try and keep him under control and to not let things get out of hand, and I think that we managed quite well most of the time and on most (not all) of the records. When we play live, we still have that bit of metal because the guitarist we have now is basically a metalhead, old school of course. That is the music he prefers, so it is natural that it'll show in the way we play too, but I think it is a combination that has always worked for us. As for new metal or crossover bands, I know that there are a lot of them out there but as I don't buy any records, I wouldn't know who they are or where they are from. But when we play live, I get to hear lots of them, and like anything else, some are good and some are bad, but so what, everyone should be free to play anything they like.

MRR: How do you think punk rock and hardcore have changed since Raw Power first started playing? Have the changes been positive or negative? Why?

Mauro: Even today, all I listen to on my stereo are albums that have been here since the '80s, so to me, hardcore and punk stopped there. When I hear new stuff live or on the telly or CDs, I always think that punk rock is still like it was, while hardcore has become a mixture of hardcore and pop music, which I'm not saying is bad—some of it is very good. I'm sure that it is only thanks to those bands that we, as old as we are, are still around, so I cannot complain about them. Then, of course, there are old bands that are still out there doing the stuff that they use to do 20 years ago, but I already have that music.

MRR: Kind of following on from the last question, what kind of effect do you think the internet has had on the hardcore scene, on the bands who are part of the scene, and the music?

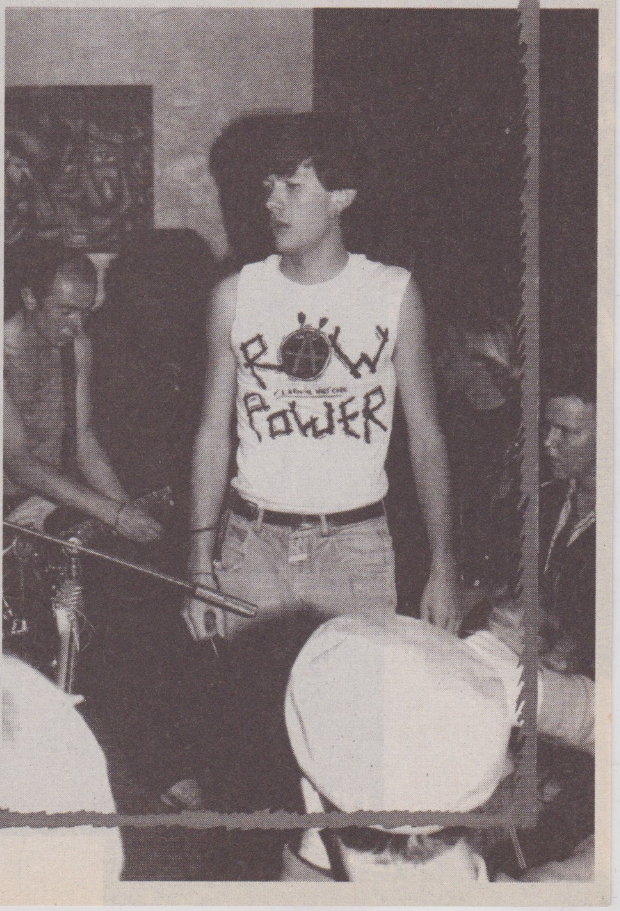
Mauro: I think the internet has helped a lot. In many ways, it has made it possible for anyone to get their music heard around the world, and to let everybody know about them. To put a tour together now, it's very easy and it is all thanks to internet. Even to do an interview like this is simple, when before it was all a lot more complicated. Sometime maybe you were more happy when something worked out well because you had to sweat so much to achieve it, while now it is a lot simpler, but in general I think it has been the saving key for hardcore and punk music.

MRR: What's next for Raw Power?

Mauro: Next? Well, first of all, we are still playing and for us, we are playing a lot as we don't have a label or a proper agency or any kind of management so, we play and go around quite a bit. Then of course at the beginning of August we will be on the West Coast again for two weeks and we are now putting some new songs together, and once they are roughly recorded and sound good, we might put 'em out (if we find a label good enough to put it out for us, so labels out there you have been warned!), and then who knows, just carry on for a bit longer while we can and while people still want to see us.

MRR: If there's anything that you'd like to add...

Mauro: Well, I just want to thank you and people like you for showing interest in the band. Without you we would have been dead and forgotten years ago. So thank you and thanks to all the kids that come to see us, and have fun with us, and come and talk to us. This is what we love best, playing and meeting new people and seeing new places and this has always been the real Raw Power spirit. Thank you.



PORTLAND CITY HARDCORE JUNKERS

DEATHCHARGE

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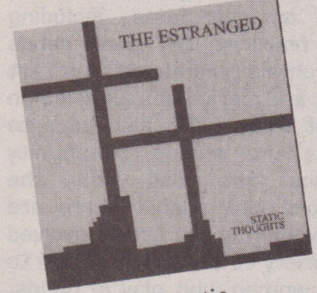

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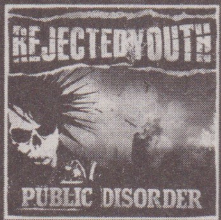

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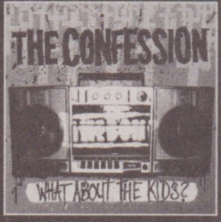

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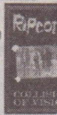

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CLITFEST CHICAGO

Chicago Clitfest is a non-profit, community-based event organized around the same ideals that inspired fests such as Ladyfest, La Rivolta, Noc Walpurgii and others from all over the world. It is a women-centered punk fest that is open to women and women-identified persons who have an interest in or are involved with punk culture. Our fest is centered around women playing punk music, and even though the beauty of punk culture is that fact that there is no inherent doctrine or set of rules, we all have progressive views that actively combat sexism, racism, homophobia, and discrimination of any kind. We believe in equality and fairness. We believe that women have much to contribute beyond simply "women's issues," but also that those issues are important and affect everyone.

We will facilitate workshops covering some of the more traditional feminist areas—self-defense, sexuality issues, women's health care—as well as GLBT community issues, gentrification, and other areas affecting our Chicago communities. We will also include workshops that help to directly further women interested in music and musicianship, such as basic musical equipment education and accessibility.

The individuals involved in the fest are diverse in age, orientation, and culture, and this fest will stay true to the diversity that the women in the Chicago punk community have to offer. We will focus on local music to emphasize the fact that the resources offered by the Chicago punk community are unique, and that it has been going strong for many years. Although the roots of this event are activist- and feminist-based, the terminology falls short; we are all activists and all feminists, but part of the larger community of Chicago. Inequality affects everyone and we hope that Clitfest will be a reminder that everyone must participate and work together to create solutions. Article by Chicago Clitfest Committee.

The idea for Clitfest originated in Minneapolis' Profane Existence Collective in 2004. The first fest was held in there with the following goals: to promote the active participation of women in the punk movement and to educate against and help eradicate sexism in punk and beyond. The fest included sets by punk bands with female members and workshops focusing on women's issues.

Last summer, it was Richmond, Virginia's turn to host Clitfest. All reports from this fest were glowing. The diversity of bands and workshops were outstanding. After a group of women active in the Chicago DIY punk scene attended these fests, they contacted members of Profane Existence to ask if Chicago could host the event in 2008. The answer was resoundingly positive: "There should be a Clitfest in every city, every year."

Clitfest in Chicago will follow the format of past fests, including shows featuring DIY punk bands with female members, an art exhibit, and workshops focusing on feminist issues. We also hope to capture the strong community dynamics that exist within the Chicago's punk scene. There are many women in the scene involved on a variety of levels. In addition to all the women who play in bands, there are those who document the scene, book shows, create independent works of art, and many, many more.

Chicago is also home to a very diverse collection of bands with female members that span the various genres of punk. There are garage, political punk, crust, hardcore, and pop punk bands. We hope to showcase this diversity at the fest by focusing on our tremendous local scene.

Chicago is also home to one of the largest Latino punk scenes in the US. In addition to the musical diversity and female-centered bands, we made a conscientious effort to include those that are racially diverse as well. In the spir-

SANGRE DE ABAJO

Photo: Gabriel Perez D.

it of out community-centered focus, we intend to include a workshop titled "Know Your Rights," which will address immigration rights issues that effect so many of our friends, families, and neighbors.

Though there are many supportive men in our scene who have offered to help, we made the decision not to include them in the planning process. These men, whom we are affectionately referring to as the "Men of the Clitfest," will be included in various volunteer activities as we get closer to the fest. Keep your eyes out for some special promotional stuff from them, too.

The meetings and subsequent committee actions have been fun, productive, and amazing due to the deeply cooperative spirit of the women who came together to make this happen. Many of the women involved have noted that our women-only approach to the meetings has made them feel comfortable discussing a variety of issues. This has led to a very open dialogue, which has made this process an interesting and rewarding experience for many of us. We have had some issues along the way, as the group is very diverse and all of us bring different values and perspectives to the table, but thankfully all of the storms have been weathered.

At press time, we will be knee-deep in the details. In addition to our focus on community consciousness, we are also seeking out women to participate at every level of the process. We have selected an all-ages venue called the Galaxie, which is run by a woman who features independent art, music, and dance events in her space. We are tracking down a female sound technician to run the board during the event. We are also hoping that the majority of the workshop coordinators will be women.

We plan to promote this event online and in print—basically all over the place.. We will also continue to fundraise. Our fundraising efforts have also been an integral part of the planning process. We plan to donate any profit made above and beyond the costs (which include paying the bands, most of which will be driving to the fest at a time when gas will likely be $5.00 a gallon) to local female-centered organizations, such as the Chicago Women's Health Center, that focus on women's health and wellness issues.

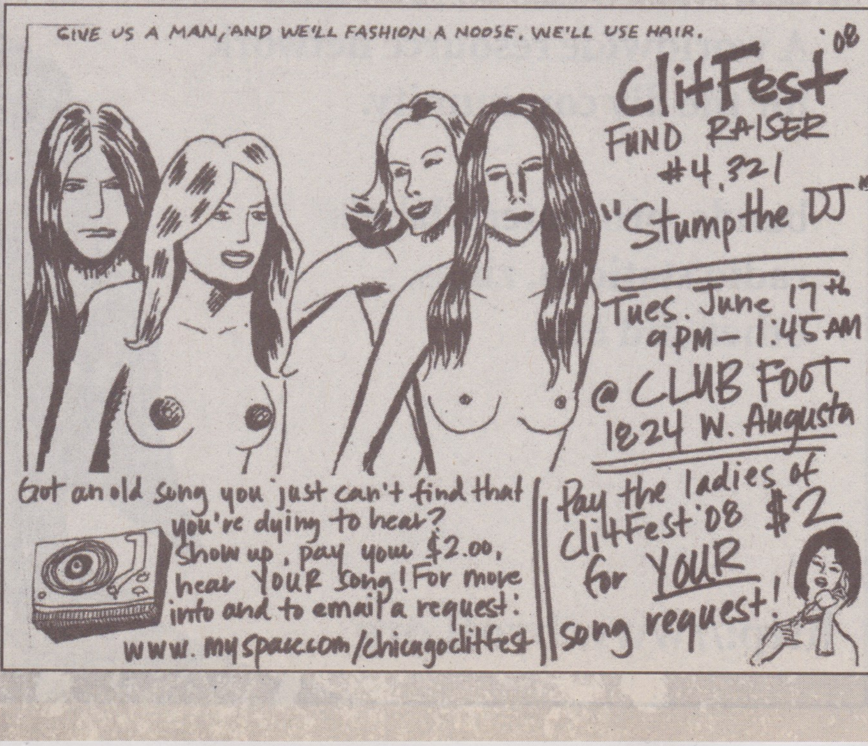
Clitfest will be held on Friday, August 15th and Saturday, August 16th, 2008 at the Galaxie, 2603 West Barry, Chicago, Illinois. While these are the only finalized dates, we are currently planning a barbeque/matinee show for Sunday, August 17th, featuring more locals and some surprises. For more information on the web, check out our website at www.freewebs.com/chicagoclitfest, and our MySpace page at www.myspace.com/chicagoclitfest.

Here is a list of the confirmed bands so far:

Barren
Black September
Bromance
Carnal Knowledge
Cojoba
Condenada
Daylight Robbery
Eunich
Krunchies
97 Shiki
Pandamonium
Red Thread
Religious SS Disorder
Sangre de Abajo
Securicore
Sick Fix
This Is My Fist
Witch Hunt

Also, we are ecstatic to announce our very special guest the Brat. We are looking forward to seeing this legendary band and their guest Angela Flores.

We hope to see you all there as a part of this event, which should be as inspiring, informative, and entertaining as each of the previous Clitfests. If you can't make it out, start planning for Clitfest '09 in your town. More events, bands, and workshops will be confirmed soon!



Got an old song you just can't find that you're dying to hear? Show up, pay your $2.00, hear YOUR song! For more info and to email a request: www.myspace.com/chicagoclitfest

Pay the ladies of ClitFest '08 $2 for YOUR song request!

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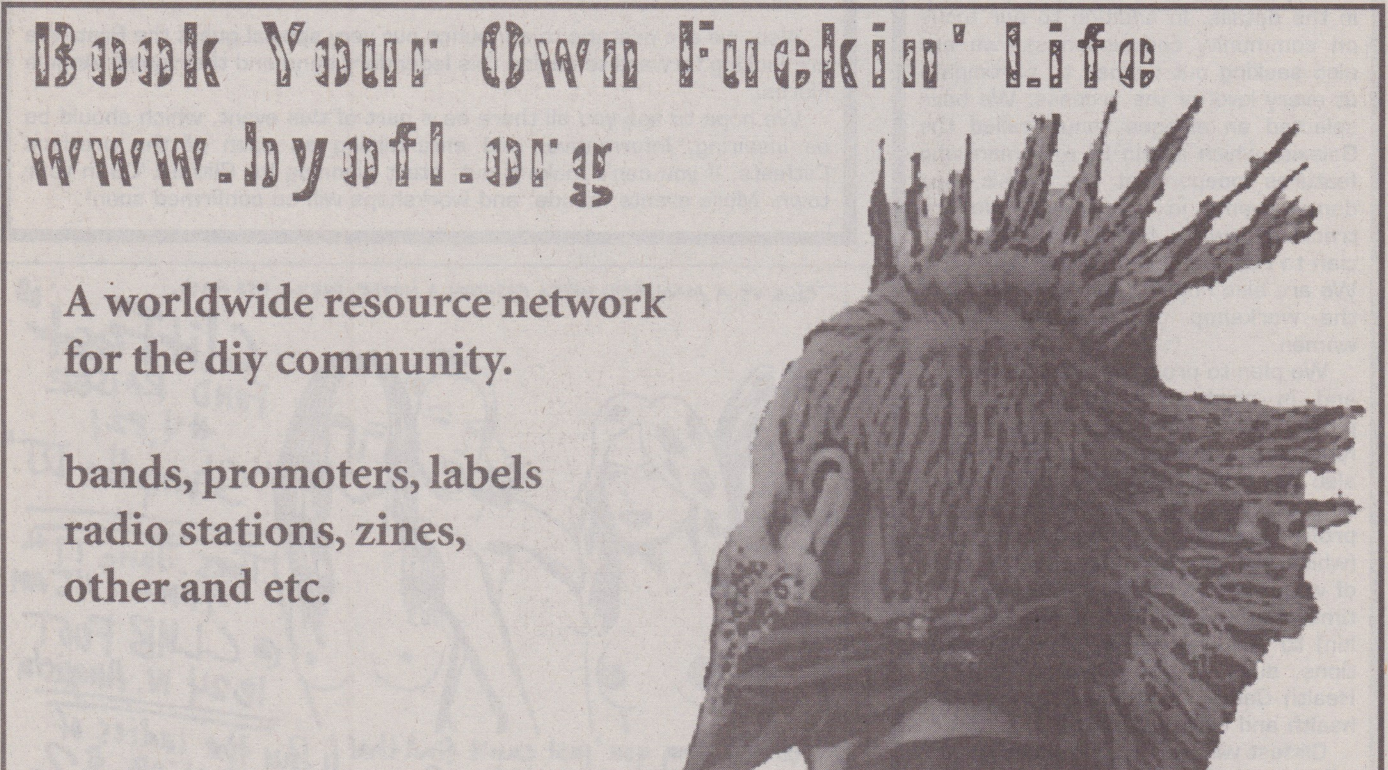

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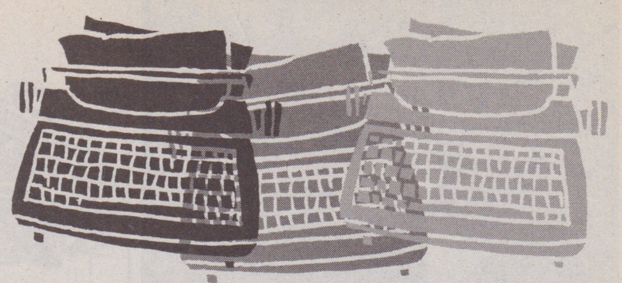

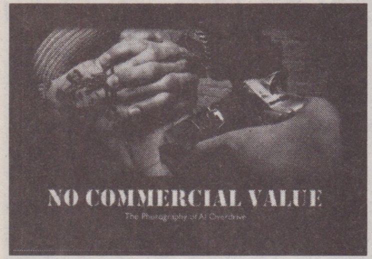
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The Photography of Al Overdrive

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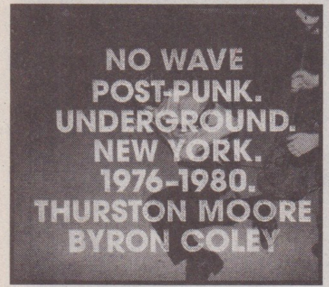
Al Overdrive
176 pages • $40.00
Al Overdrive Photography

No Commercial Value really has little value at all, period. Now wait a minute before you get all pissed off and start going off about how easy it is to be a critic and how I should be considerate when judging someone else's art and all that other bullshit, let me explain: the book has some pretty decent pictures—nothing really great or standout and the decent stuff is surrounded by a sea of shit. The best pics in the book, in my opinion, were pictures that had nothing to do with the overall theme of the book (which was, I think, "check out how hardcore we are"), they were random photos of clouds and an early morning traffic scene. There are a couple of anti-corporation photos that were as thinly veiled as an NBC primetime sitcom plot (see: beach scene with McDonalds trash in the foreground), and there are also a lot of studio photos that look like they might be an ad for Dockers or possibly Hot Topic... more like Hot Topic. I really just didn't feel like the book had a lot of artistic merit to it at all and on top of that there were a few things that made it pretty hard to even enjoy looking through the book. One of the fucking things is if you are going to do a book of all photos, how about some captions under the photos that might be nice. And how about some fucking page numbers so I don't feel like I'm playing "Where's Waldo" every time I am fucking looking up a photo in the back, just a suggestion.

In conclusion, the book left something to be desired. I think that's what I just said in the review I just said it like a real asshole.

—Jason Smith



No Wave: Post-Punk Underground. New York. 1976-1980
Thurston Moore & Byron Coley
Abrams Image
143 pages • $24.95
115 West 18th St
New York NY 10011

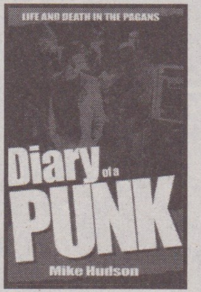
At this point No Wave is almost a meaningless term, used to give irrelevant bands like The Yeah Yeah Yeahs some kind of undeserved edge. The idea of New York in the late '70s as a kind of crumbling playground for artists, criminals and nihilists has also been reduced to an advertorial cliché in a city now known more for its cupcakes and expensive rent. But at some point New York City was a dark and falling apart place, where you could live on the Bowery and work a couple days a week and get by.

The idea of No Wave would seem to be the ultimate reactionary stance; a blank-stared fuck you to love, death, music, life, the rock'n'roll tradition. An idea in direct opposition to the way the scene has been memorialized as part of a downtown bohemian continuum. No Wave is almost the ultimate year zero anti-music ideal. No sneaky rock'a'rolla licks or 12-bar blues references in a fuckin Teenage Jesus And The Jerks or DNA song. Influenced by the European Dada movement, and the bleakness of the Lower East Side, a combination of black humor and poverty gave the scene its sound and aesthetic. The humor is oblique and vicious and forgotten now maybe because of the seeming aggro-intellectual premise behind the noise. That's one of the cooler parts of this book, you get a real sense of the people behind the pose, the one-liners and put downs are sharp like broken glass.

No Wave is set up in the traditional punk rock history style with lots of collected conflicting anecdotes and memories from the various participants, a family tree and a glossary. The book is image heavy, obviously—it's a coffee table book. Most of the photos are previously unpublished, coming from a photographer named Julia Gorton's recently uncovered archive. I really enjoyed the random ephemera: the fliers for film showings, a '76 art school calendar project featuring Lydia Lunch, the shows at art spaces, kitchens and Max's/CBGBs/The Roxy. I wish there has been more on *No Magazine*, but that'll probably happen in another book. The underground film scene is also given a lot of coverage which is cool, I would LOVE to see some of those Super 8s; Lydia Lunch and Pat Place pseudo fighting in a late-'70s Coney Island in *She Had Her Gun All Ready*??! I would go to that film night for sure...

The idea that anyone can make a band as long as they have a compelling idea is something that has always appealed to me. Just the fact that like Ikue Mori from DNA played her first show three weeks after picking up drum sticks for the first time is so cool and inspiring. So many women played in bands and played a large and important role in the scene as musicians, artists, photographers and promoters. It seems like gender was not a big deal or a deterrent. This is a document of a brief moment in time that has become a critical and cultural touchstone and now there's a coffee table book about it. Which is kind of funny when you think about the nihilistic anti-memorial anti-reverent tendencies of the movement depicted within. LOTS of cool pictures of bands from the Contortions to Theoretical Girls to Mars. Get this and a bootleg copy of *No New York* and you're set.

—Layla Gibbon



Diary of a Punk: Life and Death in the Pagans
Mike Hudson
159 pages • $19.95
Tuscarora Books Inc.
PO Box 987, Falls Station
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As the subtitle would suggest, this book is about Mike Hudson's time spent in Cle-punk godfathers, the Pagans. The Pagans just so happen to be one of my favorite bands of all time, so I was psyched to read this. At first I wasn't so impressed with Hudson's writing style but I was also kinda rushing through it, and once I slowed down and spent more time soaking everything in, I enjoyed it thouroughly. He writes like a normal person, which isn't surprising considering the source, but it's a breath of fresh air. At times the ego shines through like a shit-coated diamond but it makes sense to me and is really more cynical ego than self-obsessed ego. If that makes sense? I'll leave you with two quotes from *Diary of a Punk* that I really love and are about a page apart that I think really sum up the book and the general decay of life in the rust-belt: "Piling into the cars. Signing the contracts or calling the girl, putting whatever it was in our mouths in the certainty that no good could possibly come of it. We did it anyway. Fuck you." "If somebody asked you, 'If you died right now, what would you wish you did that you never did?' You'd say, 'Nothing,' because there are things you did do that you wish you hadn't done instead." The Pagans ruled and this book is great. What are you waiting for?

—Justin Briggs

"I hated it."
-Conor's Mom

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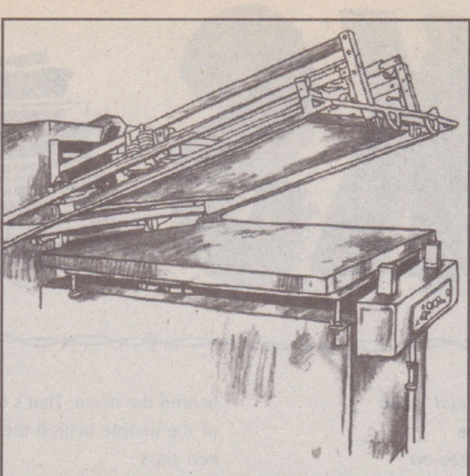

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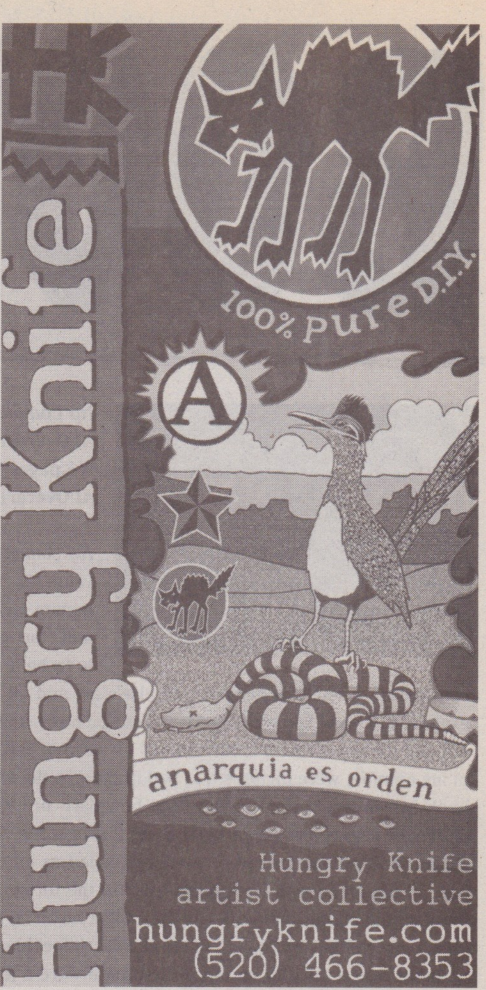

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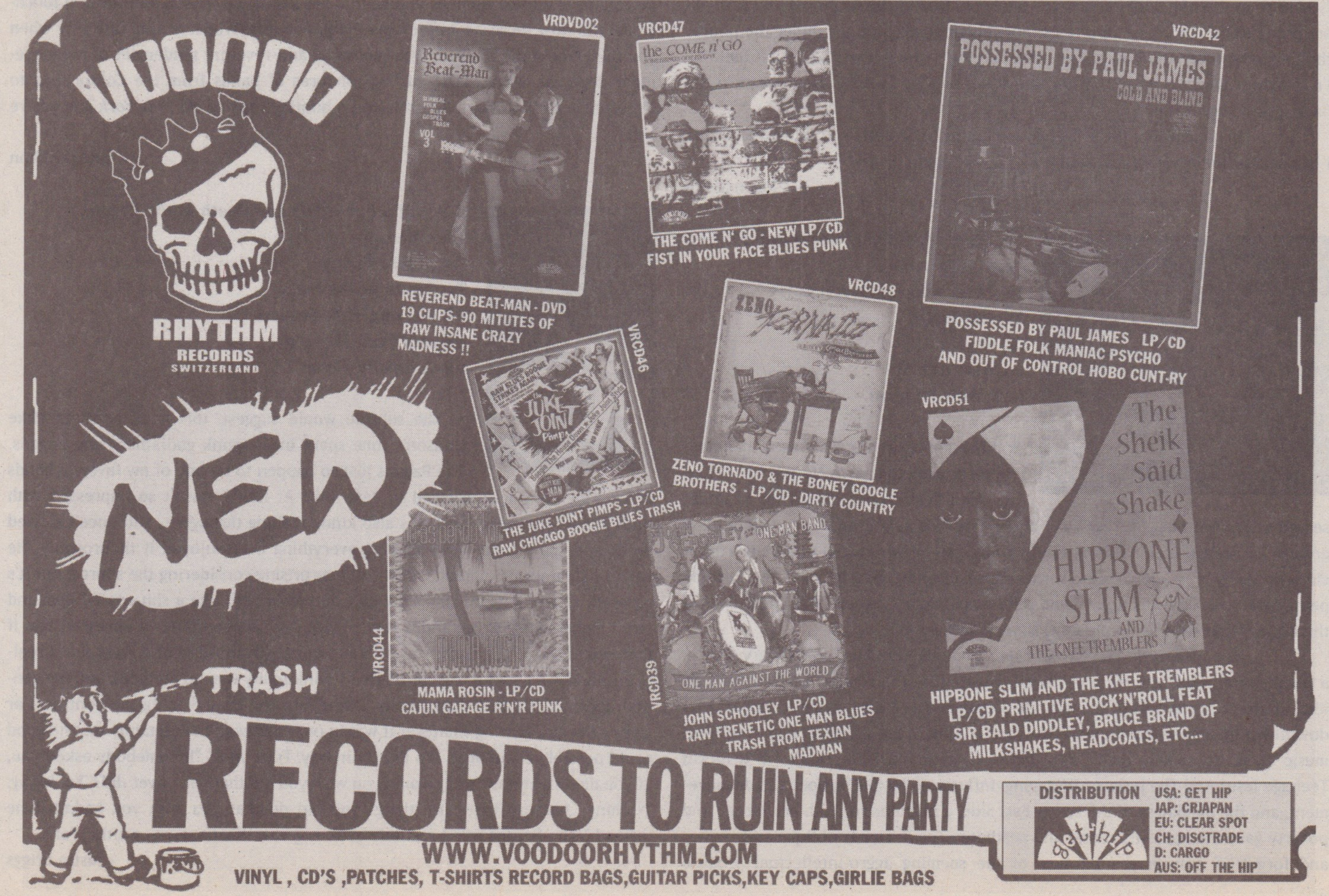

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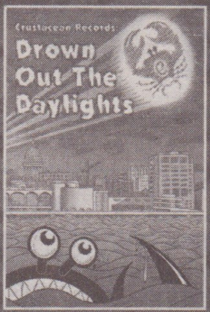

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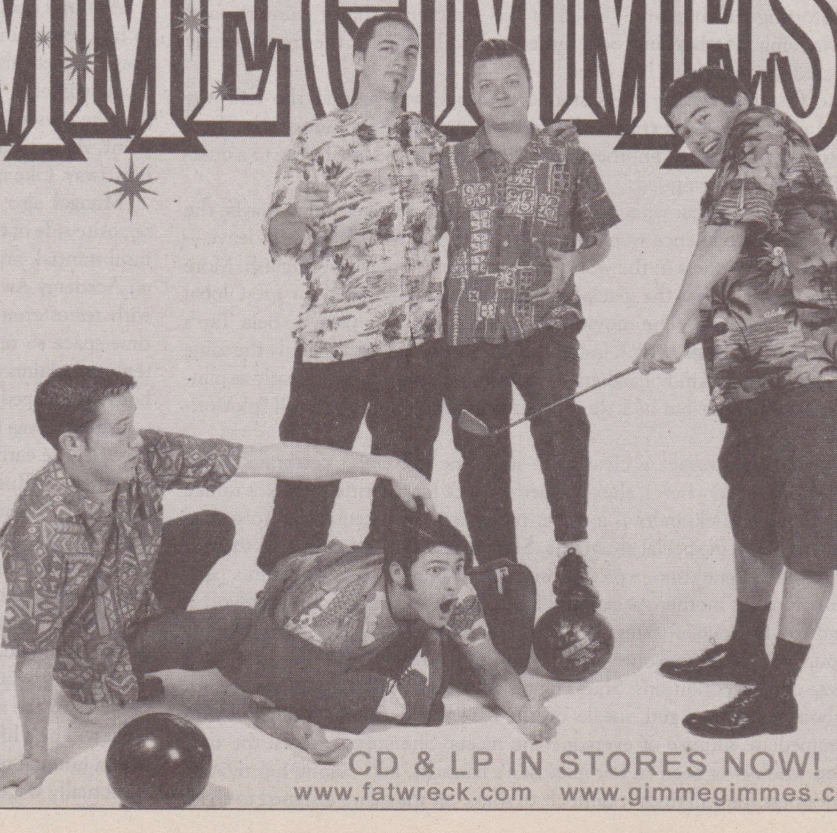

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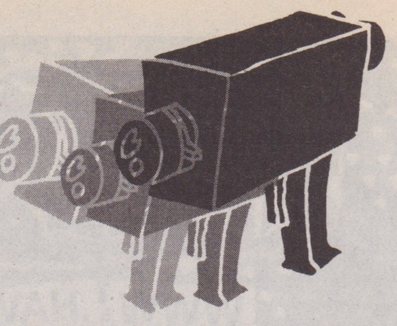
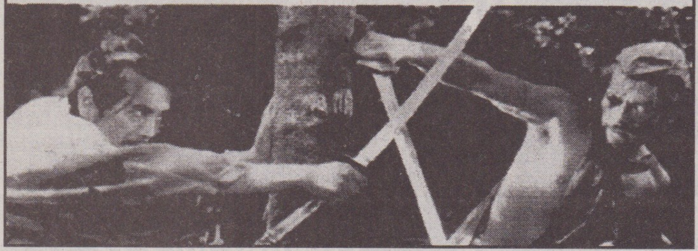


FINAL CUT

BY STEVEN SPINALI



HOLIDAYS IN THE DUST

American troops aren't the only ones taking tours of a hostile land. **Aleksandra** takes director Aleksandr Sokurov to the front lines of the Chechnya conflict, the unlikely locale of his most recent study of intimate family life under fire. The main surprise for most viewers is how relatively non-judgmental he is about the complexities of war and peace.

Sokurov's celebrated **Mother and Son** began his informal series (of sorts), to be finished by **Father and Son** and, later, this film. The first was probably one of the oddest movie experiences. It was a near-capacity audience, and I was uncharacteristically late. From the moment I stepped into the theater, I was struck by the dense cloak of silence that seemed to envelope the hall. The film itself turned out to be an intensely impressionistic portrait of a dying mother and her dutiful son. Almost immediately, I was thrilled by the innovative photography, in which margins of the frame were seemingly soaked in the distorting lens of tears. The effect was sometimes almost painterly, and quite moving. **Mother and Son** turned out to be one of the more artfully composed, original films I've seen.

The first few theater-goers started drifting away around the half-way point. I was at a loss to explain why they left, but several minutes later, these defectors were joined by another couple. This continued until close to a quarter of the hall had emptied.

I couldn't figure out what was going on. At first, I thought that maybe the members of the audience were so affected that they felt they had to leave—there's enough sadness in the world without even more family anguish. More likely, however, it was the glacial pace of the film (and that's by pre-Global Warming standards). The movie had roughly the same pace as Bela Tarr's acclaimed **Satantango**, which lasted nearly eight hours with roughly the same pace, and a similar kind of audience reaction. **Aleksandra** isn't nearly as punishing for audiences, but its style of filmmaking isn't what you'd call "plot-oriented."

Galina Vishnevskaya is clearly the star. One of Russia's celebrated divas (she's known everywhere), she's the perfect pick for the title role. Not unlike her actual self, Aleksandra is a rather pushy soul and accustomed to special treatment, even in special situations. She's taken a military train to the war front to see her grandson, a professional soldier and division leader in a position to grant his mother special privileges. Much of the arid humor revolves around the fish-out-of-water situations she finds herself in. A slow-moving matron, she seems a prisoner of her own flesh, and must take frequent rests in these curious conditions. She's given a tour of the installation, seems curious about handling a gun, sneaks off the base without permission, and wins the immediate surprise of everyone she meets. She appears to be the only woman who's ever been in her grandson's barracks, and despite her relative harmlessness she still finds it difficult to shake off the guard assigned to shadow her every movement.

Aleksandra's son (Vasily Shevtsov) is smart and capable, all of maybe thirty years old, and still unmarried despite his prestigious position. He's also, at least in their private moments together, utterly dedicated to his grandmother, and apparently accustomed to her special brand of pushiness. Aleksandra may be used to getting what she wants (like this special visit), but it's clear that he takes her after with his genial authority. In fact, this grandson is the one person in the film able to exert immediate control over her.

In the short week she spends with the troops, she becomes a kind of surrogate mother for the men, rendering advice even when not requested—in short, her role comes naturally, a mother's job. Aleksandra blends into the role so well that it's easy to imagine soldiers with embedded characters just like her. It's just another thing sorely missing from the military, at least the Russian army, as rendered here.

The substance of the film emerges when she slyly evades army roadblocks with a bribe in her typical imperious way. After a walk through overgrown paths, she comes upon a sorry excuse for a village. The men vend cigarettes, but refuse to sell them to anyone aside from the army. It's there that she meets a small community of women and becomes something of a local celebrity (or maybe the real Vishnevskaya has a chance to fill the film with her own personality). This crumbling town has dangerous types passing in and out of view, but Aleksandra's authority wins the day. She even manages to get cigarettes for the troops.

Not that much else happens in the film. As with **Mother and Son** (and so many of Sokurov's other works), the visuals always dominate. The film's world is a grim martial tone, an earthy brown. She's stepped into a place where war has begun to disintegrate everything it touches, even the colors.

At film's end, she leaves the same way she arrived, on an army train back to her home, unlikely to see her grandson again. Conventions of film language suggest that the subtly drawn story is all about war and its unpredictable effects. Aleksandra asks her grandson why he decided to stay a soldier; he says it's his job, and she's willing to let it drop at that. From that point, Aleksandra's quest is over. Her whole visit had been about wresting him away. Like most of the exchanges, it's delicate and fleeting.

Mongol also hails from Russia (actually, Kazakhstan), but occupies the opposite side of the artistic spectrum. **Aleksandra** is subtle, sometimes almost insubstantial, and nearly lacking in plot; **Mongol**, which was nominated for an Academy Award last year for best foreign film, is vast and epic, and fueled with testosterone. **Aleksandra** is nearly contemporary; **Mongol** occupies a time-space so remote to us that despite its historical roots, it has only the remotest claims to accuracy. They both share a surprising foundation in that both are steeped in war.

Mongol was directed by Sergei Bodrov—a fact that brings its own baggage. In the early days of the khans, then-Mongolia was a neighbor and bitter enemy to Russia. It's not surprising that modern Mongolians might expect the usual hatchet-job on their cultural history, and only natural when the story would be told by their ageless rivals. It's initially disappointing that only minor roles are held by Mongolian actors, but more encouraging that the cast is a pleasing mix of Asian talent.

This isn't *quite* the story of Genghis Khan. The action begins with flashes of his childhood, but settles down when he's a young man (Tadanobu Asano). In the early sequences, you can't help but be more impressed by its cultural detail than the action. It's a rough time in which the young Temudjin forges what will be a life-long dedication to his betrothed, Börte (Khulan Chuluun). It's an unusual relationship in that, unlike other Mongol princes of the time, he actually wages a small war to win her back—a pivotal sequence.

The plot is rather distended, which is to be expected for an epic with more than its share of wide-screen sprawl. Despite the generic battles (often, slow-motion slashings on horseback), the conflicts and relationships are especially gripping.

In particular, the photography by Sergei Trofimov and Rogier Stoffers holds your attention even when the plot slows. Stoffers is a familiar name in both domestic and international film circles—the perfect talent to capture the story's vast palate.

Some might be disappointed that the film only covers the future conquerer's "formative years," but don't let that get in the way of your enjoyment. **Mongol** is only the first of a projected three-film cycle covering the life of Genghis Khan. While the first installment is clearly sympathetic, there's no telling how the Khan's more barbaric future will be handled. As it is, **Mongol** is a pleasure you don't need to be guilty about—a raw, vibrant tale a large budget, and even one or two bits of history.

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

I'M NOT SHOCKED BY PUNK, I'M SHAMED BY IT

It's been a long time since I've seen **D.O.A.** I've forgotten what a great film it is. It is unfortunately not on DVD. It probably will never be released since director Lech Kowalski seems to have a hard time getting his films officially released. **D.O.A.** played at Berkeley's Pacific Film Archive as part of the *Louder, Faster: Punk In Performance* series. Film programmer Steve Seid, when introducing the film, said he wanted to show films that were shot in the moment instead of films that nostalgically look back at punk in the late '70s, early '80s. I thought that was a great idea. Maybe he is on to something about why punk history films are so boring.

D.O.A. centers on the Sex Pistols first and only US tour in 1978. The Sex Pistols famously, and some might say stupidly, avoided playing the obvious cities like New York and Los Angeles on this trip. Instead they played southern cities Atlanta, Memphis, Dallas, San Antonio, etc before ending up in San Francisco. US audiences fueled by media hype of the band were either flying their freak flag or ready to beat up the band. I still hope some people actually showed up because they wanted to see the Sex Pistols play. Christian protestors were also on the scene. One show was oversold. Sid Vicious was drugged out and smashes an audience member over the head with his bass. Although the "victim" is interviewed after being thrown out of the club admitting that he was trying to start a fight with Vicious.

The Sex Pistols tour footage is interspersed with scenes from England. Shown are X-Ray Spex, the Clash, the Rich Kids, Generation X, Sham 69, plus more. The Sham 69 footage is particularly interesting. While the Sex Pistols are being booed and harassed in the US, the audience at the Sham 69 show is all packed up against the stage and singing along with the band. It is quite a different atmosphere. Even the people who are interviewed about punk such as English Council Member Bernard Brooke Partridge and anti-smut crusader Mary Whitehouse don't look down on the punks, but they also don't sensationalize them. In America the press is reporting that the Sex Pistols are urinating on each other.

Director Kowalski may be making a comment on the difference between the two countries attitudes toward punk. He also comments about the mainstream misconception that punk music is easy to play and that punks aren't talented. Terry and the Idiots is a band of unknowns just starting out. Their show in front of a mostly indifferent pub crowd is a dud. The music is cacophonous, but not very interesting. Terry is not an exciting front man. Frustrated by the show, Terry thinks all he needs is a new band.

D.O.A. also includes the infamous interview with Sid and Nancy at the Chelsea Hotel where Sid keeps nodding off and snoring mid-sentence. Nancy berates him for dropping cigarettes on the bed before she changes out of her rubber shirt into a black lace bra. I prefer the smaller details like someone holding up a Crime poster at the beginning of the film. As well as the guy showing off his Normals t-shirt and a girl stating she got into the Mabuhay by saying she was with the Dicks. (www.extinkt.com)

X-Ray Visions does the obscure, nostalgia documentary the correct way. The X-Ray Café was an all-ages music venue in Portland, OR operating from 1989-1994. It began as a pizza place The UFO Café owner allowed some musicians to book bands there to get people into to buy pizza. The owner wasn't paying his rent so the musicians took over the lease and re-opened it as the X-Ray Café. There was an open attitude of allowing anyone the shot at stardom, so many creative types played at the club. Bigger and soon to be really big bands played there too. There was a clubhouse feel. This documentary captures that feeling. It is an oral history of people remembering the good and bad of the place, often in different ways. Interviewed is a wide range of people from the two guys who ran the place, Ben Ellis and Tres Shannon, to the owner of the building, to the guy who built the staircase, and lots of the bands who played there.

Hearing all these great things about the X-Ray Café you can only wonder why it didn't last. Looking at the footage, you can see it. At most shows there is no one in the audience. One guy sort of brags that he never paid to get into the club. Then he kind of reluctantly admits that maybe that was the problem. (www.microcosmpublishing.com)

Channel 3 was a band that seemed to make all the wrong decisions. Fortunately, they aren't afraid to talk about all of it. Channel 3: One More For All My True Friends is their cautionary tale. Channel 3 started as a bunch of friends playing music in a garage in the Valley. They played at parties in the neighborhood. They recorded a demo, which got them signed to Posh Boy, and Rodney played them on the radio. They toured the US. Then began the gradual slide into irrelevance. They left Posh Boy for Relativity. Band members quit or got kicked out. The music became more melodic. Their look changed. Then they broke up.

Channel 3's story is kind of sad since they seem like such nice guys. At least they have a good attitude about it, chalking it up to naiveté, stupidity, and ego. They don't seem to regret it, but aren't afraid admit that they would probably do things much differently. Plus the band recently reformed. Amazingly the members still look like they did in 1981. It's wild.

Also included on the Channel 3: One More For All My True Friends DVD is three songs shot at Target Video in San Francisco, their reunion performance at Al's Bar in Los Angeles 2006, as well as a CD of the reunion show. (www.tkorecords.com)

Lydia Lunch has come along way from being the girl that brought the Dead Boys lunch while they practiced. Lydia Lunch Video Hysterie: 1978-2006 follows her musical development and history. It starts with her No Wave band Teenage Jesus and the Jerks at Max' Kansas City in 1978. She defiantly slides her guitar while looking a bit uncomfortable on stage. That doesn't last long. By 1980 she is more relaxed with 8 Eyed Spy. She then goes on to play with Roland S. Howard of the Birthday Party, Mark Cunningham, Die Haut, Terry Edwards, and more. The music moves away from the noise of No Wave toward more ambient experimental used more as a background to Lunch's vocals.

The extras on **Lydia Lunch Video Hysterie: 1978-2006** are pretty minimal. However, one is sort of an overview of her career including photos, film clips, and radio interviews. During one of the interviews Lunch is asked about Courtney Love. She just brushes it off until the interviewer suggests Love stole Lunch's act. Lunch curtly replies, "I never recorded any three-chord garage rock that my husband wrote for me." Ha ha. (www.mvdvisual.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

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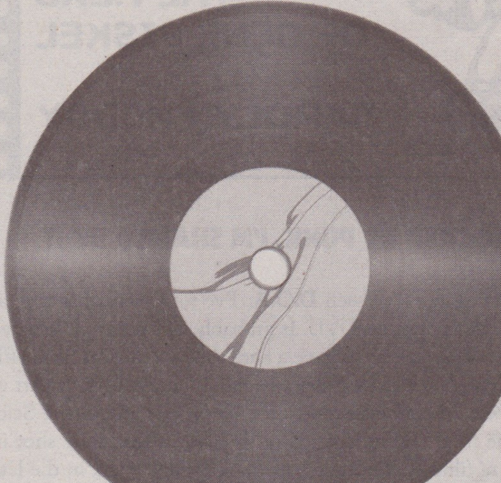
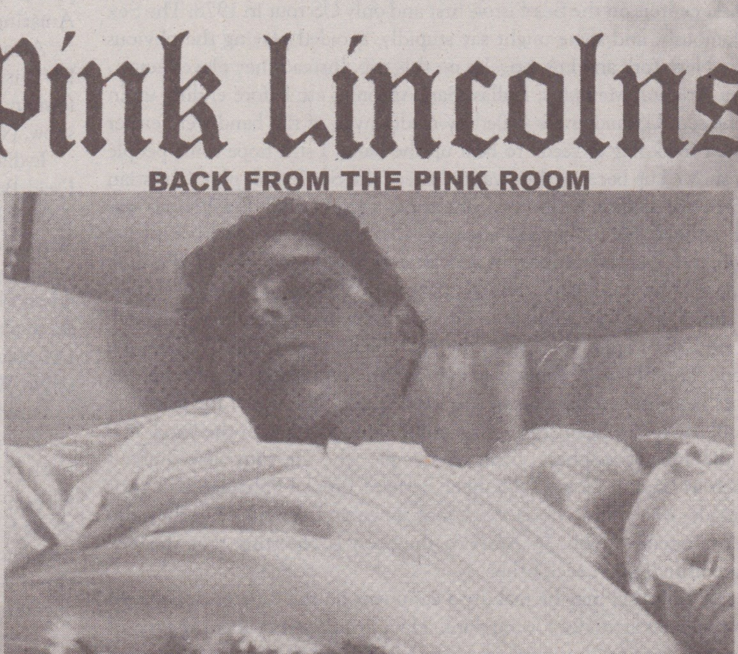


Pink Lincolns

BACK FROM THE PINK ROOM



RECORDS

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ABILITY – "Expired" EP

In between Santa Barbara and Los Angeles lies a town called Carpinteria. This is where ABILITY hails from. A group of angry kids set out to leave a massive scar on the face of modern hardcore. And judging from the tracks on this EP, stitches are going to be needed. Great production and sound coupled with well-written songs and lyrics make this a pretty impressive package. And I think these guys are half my age. Armed to the teeth with an '80s hardcore influence (you can hear Dr. Know and Darryl Jenifer's mark on these lads) that makes the bigger bands in hardcore seem too polished with no edge. Make with the *quickness* and get this. (JH)
(Fine Print, fineprintrecords.bigcartel.com)

ACTIVE MINDS – "It's Perfectly Obvious That This System Doesn't Work" LP

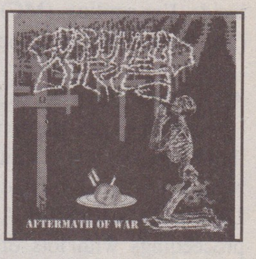
Long-standing UK vets fire up another round of blasting somewhere in between classic '80s (VARUKERS, ANTI-SYSTEM) and '90s (uh, ACTIVE MINDS themselves, HEALTH HAZARD, etc.) scathing UK hardcore, and an occasional grind-y blaster, as well as a few less-successful longer metal and POGUES-ish kind of tunes. Sadly, this 13-song LP stands out as a complete modern oddity in that its lyrics are about real-world politics, thoughtfully described in a large booklet, with deft critiques of American global dominance, Christianity, vivisection (though no one ever seems to mention the link between vivisection and cigarette companies—stop vivisection? Stop smoking!), punk scene fantasies, junk culture, sexual stereotypes, and more. I always felt the "active minds" were this band's strong suit, and the music just assisted the ideas, but here I'm pleasantly surprised that the music blasts just as hard as the thought put into the lyrics. A refinement of their '90s EPs with great primitive thundering riffs and chaotic torrential hardcore matched with well-presented, thought-through ideas and a willingness to experiment outside of a formula make this recommended. But next time, stencil not font! (KS)
(Loony Tunes, 69 Wykeham St, Scarborough, N. Yorks, Y012 7SA, UNITED KINGDOM)

AGATHOCLES / GORGONIZED DORKS – split EP

Let's see if I can find a new way to talk about AGATHOCLES, a way without talking about how many releases they put out—lo-fi political/anarchist grindcore, and on this split, a bit more lo-fi than usual. The fact that these tracks are so raw, combined with the little note insert saying the sides of the 7" are mislabeled, meant that honestly, I could barely tell which band I was listening to. And this is from someone who owns more than fifteen AGATHOCLES CDs! GORGONIZED DORKS is even more lo-fi than their split-mates, and these tracks seem to have been recorded a few years ago. They are a two-person band, which always gets points in my book, and they play noisy hardcore that is not really grind because they aren't that heavy. I would say that this 7" is only for big fans of either band, as I can't imagine anyone getting turned onto AGATHOCLES or GORGONIZED DORKS from this listen. (MH)
(Agromosh, www.myspace.com/agromoshrex)

ALL THOSE OPPOSED / THIRD DEATH / HULK OUT – split LP

All right, I've procrastinated left and right before finally forcing myself to sit down and do this review because it's tough to write about something that has all the cool DIY attitude and aesthetic, but still falls short of being remarkable. For example, we have three bands here contributing a total of eighteen songs, but all are found on only one side of this record. The other side has some etched artwork, which looks cool, but I would have rather have seen the song grooves in the wax given more space for better sound. Seriously, the sound quality suffers because of this and the only separation you can see on the record is the space between the groups, not the individual tracks. The bands themselves are all pretty damn good, but like I said, the sound is so muffled that it's really hard to tell just how good each really is. THIRD DEATH busts out ten thrashers that remind me a little of PINK TURDS IN SPACE meets CHARLES BRONSON. ALL THOSE OPPOSED blends fast hardcore with a light helping of crust, and their two songs are a bit more structured than your typical generic thrashcore. HULK OUT may be my favorite of the bunch, and they dish out six sloppy and fast hardcore ragers that bring ASSHOLEPARADE to mind. All three of these Providence-area bands need to be heard, but the marginal sound quality and paper cover should oblige you to proceed with caution. (BG)
(Tor Johnson, PO Box 1556, Providence, RI 02901, www.torjohnsonrecords.com)



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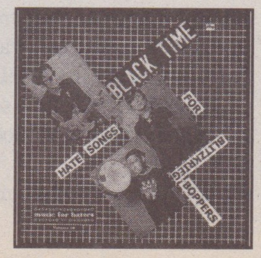

BLACK TIME
HATE SONGS FOR BLITZKRIEG BOPPERS
music for haters

AMBER ALERTS / WIZZARD SLEEVE – split EP

If WIZZARD SLEEVE hasn't won you over yet, this outta do it. Damaged, simplistic, and hopelessly drugged punk rock that recalls aspects of early CHROME in an insultingly stupid yet fantastic and fun way. With the emphasis on getting weird for so many bands as of late, WIZZARD SLEEVE is refreshing if only for the fact that they can make such an interesting, fucked-up racket without letting a silly thing like intellect get in the way. I applaud them for it. AMBER ALERTS, making their debut here, are in the same league. The bedroom electronics and, uh, lite subject matter ("My Dick Is Tha' Bomb") keep the theme running across both sides. A split with no clear victor *and* perfectly matched bands. Somewhere, deep inside, I'm smiling. (MC)

(Jeth-Row, www.myspace.com/jethrowrecords)

ANS / REPROACH – split EP

Fuck yes, you lucky fucks! Two relentless thrash-masters have split a mind-numbing 7" record on Gnarly Slaughter Records from Denton, Texas. REPROACH initiates the punk proceedings with lots of furious speed punk! The metal-laced edge of this in-your-face punk rock works perfectly! REPROACH bulldozes through "You Deserve It," "Skateboarding Saves," "Onward to Destruction," "Kicked in the Teeth," "Family Shooting," "Fuck Us All," and more! Fucking brute force spoken here! After you catch your breath, flip this EP over and ANS will finish kicking your ass into next week! The hard-metal hammer-attack of "Kooks Go Home" builds into a dangerous SLAYER-type bloodbath! The vocals will rip your ears off! This is thrashing skate-metal in its most pure form! Fucking amazing! ANS fries what's left of your cerebellum with "Locals Only." This little thrash number is the perfect mixture of raw power, brevity, and extreme danger! Fucking great! ANS finishes off the EP with the instrumental "Dawn Patrol." While not essential, it's OK. ANS and REPROACH have combined forces here to crush you with a massive punk/metal goliath! Get it now, you fucks! (BR)

(Gnarly Slaughter, 1200 Coit St, Denton, TX 76209)

ANTEENAGERS MC – "Illusions of the Teens" EP

Great: a dynamic new ANTEENAGERS EP hits my turntable. Four tracks (one's a danceable KICK cover) of scratchy demented punk that veers between SWELL MAPS weirdness and BILLY CHILDISH swagger, replete with deft guitar work and hooks galore. Brilliant stuff. (AM)

(Plastic Idol, www.plasticidolrecords.com)

ANTI-YOU – "Johnny Bastard" EP

Where did this one come from? This record by Italy's ANTI-YOU is awesome. The band's sound can be described as rough but melodic, similar to bands like CIA and KORO. Do yourself a favor and pick *Johnny Bastard* up. (PL)

(Puke 'n' Vomit, PO Box 3435, Fullerton, CA 92834, www.pukenvomitrecords.com)

ASSASSINATORS – "Sigt Efter Hjertet" CD

The badly drawn crusty warrior on the cover made me a little nervous about having to review this. The music is not at all what I imagined, which is not to say that I am into it, because I am not into melodi-crust. But if you like super melodic, political punk with triumphant, multi-tracked guitars and strong female vocals, this will probably be your jam. I think very possibly someone like Ariel should have gotten it for review. The guitars for some reason make me think of like IRON MAIDEN mixed with an over-produced version of SIGNAL LOST. It's super poppy-sounding and clean, which makes the above comparison seem even more incongruous than it already is, but something about the aforementioned triumphant guitars? Anyway, Danish political punk with a female vocalist—I can imagine kids going crazy, singing along in squats across Scandinavia. (LG)

(Rebel Scene, PO Box 33, 220123 Minsk, BELARUS, rusel13@gmail.com)

BADLANDS – "When Angels Are Crucified" CD

The first couple songs on this disc do not sit well with me and actually set a foul tone. Could have been the double-bass that distracts and doesn't seem to fit the rest of the record. But after that, it starts to flow more smoothly and the songs get a lot better. A few things came to mind... The first DANZIG record, *Prison Bound* by SOCIAL DISTORTION, HÜSKER DÜ, and of course, Mr. JOHNNY CASH. Victor Nefken's vocals and songwriting are a great mixture of these elements, although I'm not sure I would put this in the category of street punk or Oi!—might be a little too slick for those genres. This is more like a straight-up rock record, and not a bad one at that. (JH)

(Rebellion, www.rebellionrecords.nl)

BAD PARENTS – LP

A more basement-DIY sounding MURDER CITY DEVILS cooked up in a light sauce of late-period BLACK FLAG. Great packaging and a nice looking one-sided silk-screened 12". They're doing what they're doing pretty well, so if this sounds like it might be your jam... (P$)

(Order of the Fly, 1618 E. 7th Street, Long Beach, CA 90813, www.bad-parents.com)

BAD REACTION – "Had It Coming" CD

BAD REACTION, a band from LA, plays kind of melodic early-'80s hardcore similar to BAD BRAINS and ZERO BOYS. This CD contains material off the band's *Dare To Be Dull* and *Plastic World* EPs. Known for their great live shows and their courage to be fun, BAD REACTION doesn't stray from that notion on these recordings. Also included is their cover of BAD BRAINS' "Pay to Cum" only available on this CD. (PL)

(Reflections, Klarendalseweg 456-457, 6822 GW Arnhem, NETHERLANDS, www.reflectionsrecords.com)

BAD SPORTS – "All the Time" EP

BAD SPORTS is lo-fi power pop. The first track "All the Time" is a KINKS/early-WHO-type Mod tune. The music is punky and pretty simplistic. The vocals are a bit off key, but in a semi-charming way. Fun stuff. (CK)

(Boom Chick, 6405 Morrill Ave, Lincoln, NE 68507, www.boomchickrecords.com)

BAD SPORTS – "No Rest for the Wicked" EP

Four tracks of garage-inspired punk rock from that current hotbed of the loud and obnoxious, Denton, TX, boasting a rich pedigree of band members from THE PUMPERS, MAASTER GAIDEN, and WAX MUSEUMS. Hints of Chicago and a nice helping of *Killed by Death*/'77-sleaze punk, all rounded off by a brew of all three of the aforementioned bands. A solid release that would not sound out of place on the Criminal IQ label. (SD)

(Big Action, 915 Scheffer Ave, Saint Paul, MN 55102, zabby@bigactionrecords.com)

BAGNA / SKARPRETTER – split EP

Heck of an international project here! BAGNA is from Belarus and plays some incredible, dark, atmospheric crust. I'd be lying if I told you they didn't have a pretty big TRAGEDY and FROM ASHES RISE influence. SKARPRETTER on the other hand is from Denmark and plays downright catchy hardcore punk that packs a punch. Definitely some tough-as-nails stuff that reminds me of JESUS FUCKING CHRIST. Awesome statement on the sleeve discussing stuff going on in the bands' respective countries. Killer. (NM)

(Rebel Scene, 220123, PO Box 33, Minsk, BELARUS, rusel13@gmail.com)

BLACK TIME – "Hate Songs for the Blitzkrieg Boppers" EP

Another great garage record from BLACK TIME. Noisy, loud, and catchy. Three of the four songs are straight-up destined to be classic garage punk tunes with sing-along choruses. I don't know exactly what fascist's bathroom they are singing about, but it is fun to sing along

with it. Plus, they've included a very nice cover of LILI Z's "Ma Solitude et Moi." Then there is the last song "Lack of Red Light," which is a dirge-y surf tune with pained vocals. I'll save that one for after last call. (CK)
(Hate, Via S. Giovanni In Laterano 192/194, 00184 Roma, ITALY, haters@tiscalinet.it)

BLOODSTAINED REALITY – "Nazi Scum Burn in Hell" EP

A new band (as far as I know) from San Diego, CA playing some pretty raging old-school, bread-and-butter hardcore punk. Definitely in the '80s vein with a nod or two to ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT or NEGATIVE APPROACH. (NM)
(Plastic Fact, www.myspace.com/bloodstained)

BLOWTOPS – "Brainshaker/Crime & Remorse"

Looking at my little selection of records to review this month, I was sure that SHIT EAGLE was gonna be the bummer in the summer. How wrong I was. *This* BLOWTOPS single is the record that sounds like it was made by men that date schoolgirls, have long hair and bald spots, and wear leather gloves, winkelpicker, shoes and polyester pants. Seriously, I can't put my finger on why I found it so creepy. It's a standard Goths-in-the-garage BIRTHDAY PARTY/early-BAUHAUS/GUN CLUB tribute act, but something about it made me think of dank closed-in basements and sweaty men with bulging eyes and frizzy hair with complicated pleasures. (LG)
(FDH, www.myspace.com/theblowtops)

BOLD ONES – "Open Your Mouth" EP

What might seem like another instantly gone HoZac collectable is actually much more. Chicago's BOLD ONES has managed to craft a single that is a pitch-perfect mid-fi blast of catchy punk. In fact, assuming there are hangers-on to the classic Rip-Off Records sound and aesthetic of ten years ago, here it is, updated for a 2008 audience. That's a big deal in my book. More singles like this could remove countless ass-sticks currently squaring-up the nation. More. (MC)
(HoZac, www.victimoftime.com)

PJ BONNEMAN – "Jeg Kendte Dem Ikke" EP

OK… Member of several notable K-town bands goes the solo bedroom punk route and releases a single that manages to eclipse 99% of the records this scene has produced, including the collectable heavyweight discs lauded by everyone and their mother. This is the high-water mark, sorry. Retro (shocker!), but not the slightest bit spike-y, opting instead to tap the intangible KBD qualities that recall THE PLUGZ or any other banner combo for deviance mixed with hooks. Not a "buy and file" release like so many others, this one's got legs. Totally great. (MC)
(Spild Af Vinyl, www.spildafvinyl.dk)

BRAIN HANDLE – "Smiling/Smiling Again"

I've been privy to see BRAIN HANDLE about half a dozen times and they never disappoint. The Pittsburgh band has a certain quality that makes 'em stick out from the mid-to-late-'00s hardcore pack. They're refreshingly un-retro, but they're not reinventing the wheel either. They have a creepy heaviness that they breathe into the good ol' Midwest hardcore sound. The plodding-slow-to-ripping-fast formula has been perfected on this single and the thoughtful sprinkles of guitar texture are a welcome bonus that command attention to BRAIN HANDLE's mastery of their chosen genre. The two guitars make for a full sound, but the music thankfully remains raw, and both guitars tend to veer from the main riff into some odd chords or noise. I'm biased—I think BRAIN HANDLE is one of the best bands in the US and they're highly overlooked. I'm kind of stoked that this is on Iron Lung Records even though it will be sorely limited. It seems that bands need scarce singles in order to generate any sort of attention in this fetishist, nerd-laden, messageboard-driven era, and if any band deserves lauding, it's these nutters. Also, this is their best material to date, so start scouring. Let the freak flag fly on... I wanna hear more BRAIN HANDLE. (CI)
(Iron Lung, www.myspace.com/lifeironlungdeath)

LES BREASTFEEDERS – "Les Matins de Grands Soirs" LP

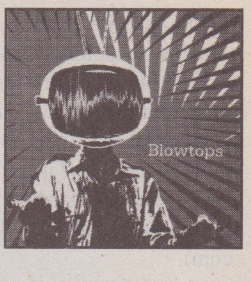
This Canadian band obviously doesn't take things too seriously with a name like LES BREASTFEEDERS, and one could also guess that they play the kind of garage punk that usually sounds better and better with each subsequent cheap beer—but that's only half of it, 'cause these guys (and gal) are also highly influenced by swinging London sounds and power pop. One song could sound like good contemporary mod similar to the EMBROOKS or the FAVOURITE SONS, and the next will have a bit of a BLONDIE influence. There are also some tight and catchy, booze-soaked rock 'n' roll stompers here, making this an eclectic set guaranteed to keep your attention through both sides. To top it off, this album has a lyric sheet (how good is your French?) and excellent sound quality. Cool shit. (BG)
(Blow the Fuse, www.blowthefuserecords.ca)

BRIGITTE BORDEL – "Sous les Tropiques du Neant" CD

How strange that I ended up with two French Canadian garage rock albums (see LES BREASTFEEDERS) to review this month! Both are on different labels and both *rock*. Is this a sign of an ass-kicking scene happening in Montreal or what? On this album, BRIGITTE BORDEL lays down twelve tracks of trashy, finger-snappin', booze-drinkin' swill that will make you want to swear off all-ages shows and just languish in dive bars for the rest of your life! These garage punks combine a bit of New Orleans-flavored piano stomp with some swamp blues, and maybe a dose of haunting Western drag, to produce a lethal potion of primitive rock 'n' roll that you just might not be able to handle. Fans of Desert punk like THROW RAG should check this out. (BG)
(Piasses Piasses, www.myspace.com/piassespiasses records)

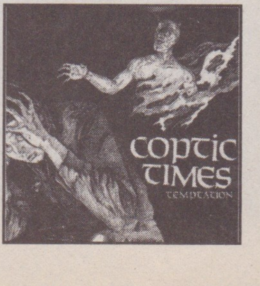
BRITO – "This Wave is Only For the Good-Hearted" LP

BRITO exists in that post-hardcore netherworld, straddling emo, math rock, post-rock, and noise rock. Repetitious drum patterns slowly build around a muscular, rumbling bass line and shards of guitar riffs, punctuated by distant-sounding, bloody screams. Part SLINT, part MOSS



SOUS LES
TROPIQUES
DU NEANT
BRIGITTE BORDEL

BS
BAD SPORTS



ICON, and part SHELLAC, this twelve-incher contains seven long-ish songs. Definitely worth seeking out if you're into this kind of stuff. I really like the sounds, but I'd be more into it if they condensed all the songs down to under two minutes and threw in a chorus or two. But then I'm getting a bit narrow in my old age. (AM)
(De Graanrepubliek, www.degraanrepubliek .com)

CARRY-ONS – "Is Anyone Listening?" CD

These guys sound a lot like ANTI-FLAG musically—punk with the "ohhhs" and an occasional ska rhythm. From the Nashville and Atlanta areas, this full-length is pretty good. Not quite as good as ANTI-FLAG at their best, but there are no real duds on here either. (RL)
(Stikman, www.thecarryons.com)

CAT PARTY – "Jigsaw Thoughts/Entitled"

This reminds of the NERVES but somehow more macho. It has that kind of LA power pop sound sung by boys that seem like they've given up in a total sad disappointment way. "Entitled" moves more towards a less countrified GUN CLUB or some less dramatic NICK CAVE project, but this has some underlying douchebag aspect to it. Like there's a certain sneer that's very cowboy/rockstar dude-ish. (MM)
(Rich Bitch, PO Box 1402, Tempe, AZ 85280)

CHARLES BRONSON / STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER – split EP

The STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER side starts with the vocalist saying, "This song is called 'Doing Drugs is Fucking Cool...'" and while I agree, I don't agree with this *complete fucking waste* of a record. Is this a bootleg or just a dumb joke released by one of the bands? Maybe released by some idiot who keeps a tape recorder in his or her pocket at shows then calls the pressing plant after with their next project? Poorly recorded live sets from these two thrashy hardcore bands. If you're a fan of STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER, or are interested, check out the other two or three records reviewed this month, and I'm sure the CHARLES BRONSON double-CD is still available somewhere. Just stupid. (VL)
(That's Dum, no address)

CHOCOLAT – "Gabrielle" EP

Skitzo, thy name is CHOCOLAT... and how wonderful it is to meet you. The title track is a rave-up powerhouse, vaguely garage, yet smarter than just about anything with that tag currently. There's more room to stretch here, yet it's still quite danceable. "Johnny Depp" is classic UK pub rock gone French Canadian. Remember NINE BELOW ZERO on that episode of *The Young Ones*? Boom, right here... except in French. "Charlotte" is romantic creep with the songwriting and vocal inflections of SUICIDE matched with a more trad instrumentation. A single that requires repeated plays... forgot what these fucking things looked like! A fine EP, one of the finest I've heard all year. (MC)
(Radio 81, www.radio81records.com)

CIRCLE FLEX / HIT ME BACK / LOSER X / THE SPROUTS – split CD

Here we have three Japanese skate-thrash bands alongside LA's HIT ME BACK. I am not sure if this was released in conjunction with, or after the fact, but the centerfold of the CD booklet is the tour poster for the HIT ME BACK 2006 Japanese tour. LOSER X has a real stripped-down recording and mixes up their thrash with a bit of a pogo beat. The standout tracks were the CIRCLE FLEX and SPROUTS songs. CIRCLE FLEX reminded me of TOTAL FURY both in music and vocal style, where THE SPROUTS went for the blown-out recording and short, to-the-point songs. They threw in a few garaged-out riffs here and there to keep it interesting. The HIT ME BACK songs have a bit of a straight edge hardcore feel, then they bust into the thrash. A couple are so unbelievably ridiculous that it is impossible to listen to them. One song has a riff that sounds like that "Walkin' on Sunshine" song, complete with handclaps and tambourine. I guess that it is supposed to be funny; I find it unlistenable. (SE)
(Hardcore Kitchen, www.myspace.com/ hardcorekitchen)

COLA FREAKS – "Ingenting Set" EP

The band name is either genius or way too corny. Named after one of the greatest Danish punk songs of all time by LOST KIDS, this band would have to be pretty mind-blowing in order to live up to its namesake song, which is an intoxicating punch in the face of new wave destruction... Let's just say that this 7" is way more restrained and knowing compared to the disgusted hysteria of the LOST KIDS' "Cola Freaks." This is the band's second EP, recorded with Alijia Trout in Memphis while they were in the midst of an un-booked falling-apart-at-the-seams American tour last summer. It's snotty and catchy—the A-side has the jams on it. Initially, I listened to side B and it was enough to write 'em off as purveyors of a generic not-quite-getting-it sound. The music just sounds like it was written for a movie about punk, if that makes sense. It just seemed once removed somehow; I kind of wanted more vengeance and fury rather than closed-off reproduction. Side A definitely turned it around for me, and the song "Ingenting Set" has such a killer riff and this rad vocal delivery that sounds like he's hating you and laughing about it. "Gi Mig Piller" for some reason made me think of the VICIOUS playing from the KBD songbook rather than *Crossing the Red Sea with the Adverts*. It's more melancholic, almost JOSEF K with these chanted bored choruses. I would pick this up if I saw it in a 7" bin, but I have a feeling this might be one of those records that the internet already sent off for and sold out the minute press run or whatever. (LG)
(Hjernespind, PO Box 505, 2200 Copenhagen, N DENMARK)

COPTIC TIMES – "Temptation" EP

When you hear that a band shares members of IRON AGE and DROPOUT, you expect good things, and this record does not fall short whatsoever. Out of Austin, TX, COPTIC TIMES takes cues from bands like BLACK FLAG, AGGRESSION, and BL'AST! Unlike most bands that list the above as their influences, these guys pull it off exceptionally well. Great slow and grooving punk rock that will make you want to "Surf and Destroy!" (PL)
(Youngblood, PO Box 236, Ephrata, PA 17522, www.youngblood-records.com)

COUNTING THE DAYS / HOLLYWOOD – split EP

I never thought that modern hardcore would sound so appealing to my cynical ears, but listening to the COUNTING THE DAYS side of this split has had an effect on this reviewer. Maybe it's the sincerity in the way the singer screams about the frustrations of coming of age and watching dreams and idols crash, or maybe it's the crunching power chords that never sway too far into the metal realm that usually turns me off from this genre. This shit is fast, but not a blur of sloppy screaming and feedback, and the lyrics are both personal and reflective of society at the same time. HOLLYWOOD, from Tennessee, starts off their side with a ripper called "Wastelands" that is slightly reminiscent of the immortal and highly underrated BAD TRIP—driving, mid-paced hardcore with melodic, raspy vocals that sing as much as scream. The guitar-work is excellent as well. I kinda dig this band, too. Just as I was getting warmed up to this side, they threw me off with a completely unnecessary and atrocious cover of "Helter Skelter." Still, the other three songs on this EP make this a worthwhile effort. (BG)
(Burn Bridges, 2981 Falls Road, Baltimore, MD 21211, www.burnbridgesrecords.net)

THE CRAWLERS – "I Hate Michael Vick" EP

Release number three by this Portland outfit. Once again, we get mid-paced to fast punk with sneer and snot that pushes this slab into being an enjoyable listen. Good stuff here, folks. (MS)
(Blind Spot, PO Box 40064, Portland, OR 97240)

THE CREEPS – "Lakeside Cabin" CD

Not to be confused with the Ohio band of the same name, Ottawa's CREEPS play awesome pop punk that owes as much to SOCIAL DISTORTION and THE MISFITS as THE RAMONES and SCREECHING WEASEL. I've been waiting for a band to pick up THE LILLINGTONS ball and run with it, and these guys have got it, right down to where THE LILLINGTONS had sci-fi, THE CREEPS have a horror concept. I can hear early OFFSPRING in here, too. They play solid, mid-to-up-tempo melodic punk rock with goofy lyrics about serial killers and dying in plane crashes. The dark lyrics go nicely with the bouncy, catchy tunes. This is up there with the best of the new crop of good pop punk bands like THE COPYRIGHTS and THE ERGS! and they also remind me a lot of (the post-GITS outfit) DANCING FRENCH LIBERALS OF '48, (who if they haven't, they should definitely check out), especially the guy's voice. This is their third album, and as soon as I'm done writing these reviews I'm off the record store to see if I can find the other two. They're that good. If I did year-end top tens, this would be near, if not at the top. Very, very good—I mean, goose-pimples-on-the-arms good. (AD)

(Black Pint, www.blackpintrecords.com)

THE CRUMP / SHYBOY – split EP

I've reviewed so many of these Snuffy Smiles splits that I'm sure I've reviewed the same one like three times and not even noticed—I'm probably a big laugh 'round at the Snuffy Smiles office. SHYBOY is, guess what? Upbeat melodic punk? Sure! They're a little less hectic than a lot of the Snuffy Smiles bands—maybe even poppier than most—I can almost hear a power-pop/'79 mod revival thing going on. THE CRUMP does sound familiar—they have a ska-ish thing goin' on, but before you vomit, it's not at all overbearing and they probably don't even know they're doing it. A wee bit like the 'TONE. Good as usual from (I think this label owes me at least a shirt for making me type this address out every month)… (AD)

(Snuffy Smiles, 12-A Kamikousaicho, Shichiku, Kita-Ku, Kyoto, 603-8117, JAPAN)

THE CRYTONES – "Shake Shake" CD

French garage that basically brings nothing new, exciting, or dynamic to the tried and tested grounds of the much-plundered '60s beat. It's well played and the songwriting is fine, but it's all too predictable and, for lack of a better word, clean. Scupper this, I'm off to listen to the new HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE... (SD)

(Brutal Beach, La Vague, Plage de Bonnegrace, 83140 Six Fours, Les Plagues, FRANCE)

DAISY CHAIN – "She's a Boxer" CD

This quartet (three girls and one guy) from Berlin plays a '80s-era pogo-punk meets Riot Grrrl style. Think BLANKS 77, VICE SQUAD, and a little BIKINI KILL—though, not with overtly feminist lyrics. I've also heard that this band has been known to cover COCK SPARRER live. All but one of the songs are in English (the other being in German). Stand-out tracks for me were "Johnny" and "No More People"—this is alright stuff here. (RK)

(Back to the Boots, www.bttb.de)

DANGERLOVES – "Young Pretender/I Don't Know Why I Try"

Sickly-sweet pop punk from Toronto. The singer's voice has a Chrissy Hynde quality to it, but I swear the phrasing on the A-side sounds like a GREEN DAY song. Lump this band in with the power pop revival if you must, but it's basically just pop music. Imagine a punkier CUB, or PRETENDERS crossed with early GREEN DAY. Those comparisons might actually turn you off, but I actually like this record a lot. (AM)

(Static Shock, www.staticshock-records.co.uk)

DEAD LUKE – "Record One" EP

This is the first release from DEAD LUKE, and I dig it. It's just one dude and apparently his name is actually Luke, and he lives in Milwaukee. The A-side is a super slow lo-fi disco cover of THE TROGGS' "I Want You." It starts off pretty minimal and I would have liked this had the entire song been as minimal as the first bit, but I also very much like the cranking it up, getting a little trippy, and screaming that it ends with. The B-side is an original called "Waste of Spaces" and it's a catchy, upbeat electro-noise-pop song with vocals heavy on the reverb/delay but low in the mix. It's the catchy lo-fi synth sounds that make this groovy. (MU)

(Sacred Bones, www.sacredbonesrecords.com)

DEAD SECTION – "World's Grey" EP

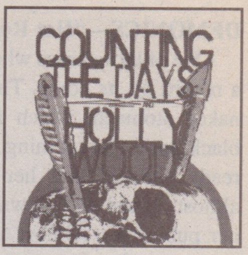
DEAD SECTION is a new band from Portland, OR made up of past and present members of RELIGIOUS WAR, ROTTEN CADAVER, CUT-THROAT, and fucking POISON IDEA! Not unlike their other bands, this is straightforward punk/HC with an occasional screaming solo, which brings to mind '80s thrash like BROKEN BONES. The pace is heightened by the singer, who screams and wails, belting out well written lyrics that suit the title of the opening song, "World's Grey," and delve deeper into its meaning with "Conclude." Descriptions are so useless—this record sounds punk. (WK)

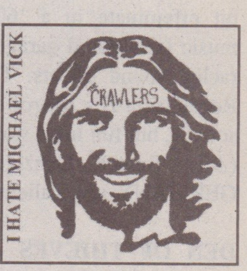
(Pissed Misanthrope, no address)

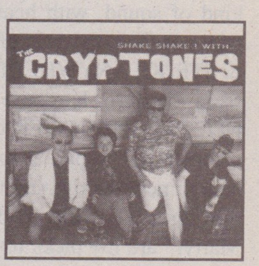
DELIRIUM TREMENS – "Presagio de Muerte" EP

This is so fucking awesome. It's so blown out that it's barely containable, just a blast of total exhilaration, and nobody in the band sounds like they can contain their excitement or fury. From Basque Country in 1984, this incredible unearthed demo is one of those things that make me psyched to be a punk. The vocals are so explosive, they kind of remind me of the RAPPRESAGGLIA song "Attack"—something about the total savageness of it, it's totally snotty and annihilating. The guitar sounds like layers and layers of noise even though it's clearly just one guitar, no effects necessary. This comes totally recommended. Basque punk fucking rules and I am genuinely bummed I did not get a reviewer copy. Shit like this defines punk for me—total DIY with a desperate sound made in desperate conditions. Seriously, the next person that tells me that they are not so inspired by the music anymore, that they find themselves going to fewer and fewer shows, I am gonna play them this fucking record and tell them to eat their words. Seriously, enough reason to stay punk 'til you're older than Jello. (LG)

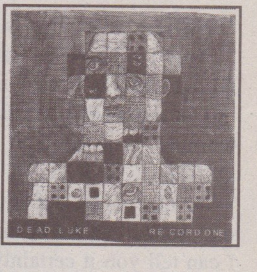
(La Vida Un Mus, www.lavidaesunmus.com)

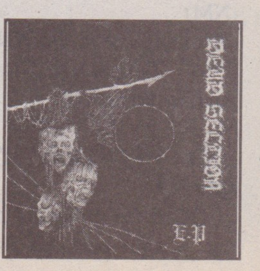






DANGERLOVES
Young Pretender





DEMONICS – "Hot Rod Pussy" CD

One of those cases when you shouldn't judge a record by its cover. This one has a woman's naked stomach, which features a tattoo of a black cat's face coming out of an engine that reads "hemi," and her underwear is pulled almost all the way down, just barely revealing her pubic hair. Almost all of the 21 songs are about cars. But this isn't some generic, macho rock 'n' roll thing. In fact, the singer sounds a bit effeminate in a '60s-pop-type way. The music is standard garage rock with lots of car racing sound effects. There is a song about Regan from *The Exorcist*. Not the most exciting sounds, but fun in its way. (CK)

(Alien Snatch, Danziger Str. 10435 Berlin, GERMANY, www.aliensnatch.com)

DEN OF THIEVES – "Letters from the Tanzerouft" CD

These guys have a post-hardcore-meets-emo kind of sound, with heartfelt, almost-pleading type vocals in the vein of VERBAL ASSAULT or STRIKE ANYWHERE. The music alternates from modern hardcore along the lines of NODES OF RANVIER to an almost FUGAZI-meets-TOOL sound at times. Nice guitar tones compliment the tight rhythms found throughout this disc. The title track and "Bleed Like a Martyr" are my picks for best cuts. If this contemporary post-hardcore sound is your thing, you should like DEN OF THIEVES, I s'pose. Good stuff. (RK)

(Exotic Fever, www.exoticfever.com)

DIRTY TACTICS – "Gangster Stamina" CD

A good trio here doing melodic punk with emo overtones and a little DILLINGER 4, ALKALINE TRIO, and J CHURCH in the mix—this would be a good fit for Boss Tuneage. Only five songs, but still a melodic rager. (RL)

(Underground Cities, www.dirtytactics.net)

DISKELMÄ – "Fun Is Here" LP

Wow! This is an amazing record. DISKELMÄ is from Finland and plays a great mix of raw dark crust like HELLSHOCK, '80s German thrash metal a la KREATOR or DESTRUCTION, and Finnish HC blended with, of course, a DISCHARGE sound. This may sound chaotic or like it may not work, but I can tell you it certainly does!! This is one of my favorite records of the year already! Shit! (NM)

(Kämäset Levyt, c/o Nakari, Vallikatu 28 A 2, 33240 Tampere, FINLAND, www.punkinfinland.net/kamanen)

DISRUPT / STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER – split EP

Of all the projects I had envisioned coming out, a split between Fresno's breakneck HC folks STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER and the gods of East Coast grind crust DISRUPT was honestly not on my radar. Especially not as a fancy picture disc! Not sure where the DISRUPT tracks come from, but it's good stuff as would be expected. STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER plays blistering raw HC, which isn't really original but isn't bad either. (NM)

(Blastcore, c/o Ryan, 1320 Escalon, Fresno, CA 93711, www.geocities.com/blastcorerecords)

DYNAMITE ARROWS – "Blowin' It" EP

The first track here sounds like nerdy Snuffy Smiles-style pop punk crossed with HARD SKIN—it sounds great. The next track is more straight-up, faster melodic punk—not quite as anthemic as the first song but great nonetheless. This is a really good record, and these guys sound very fresh—not just another tired OFF WITH THEIR HEADS clone. This could have been on one of those No Idea samplers in '99 or 2000 (and blown everyone away) but it sounds great today. I think they're from New York but I can't be sure. Anyway, if you like your punk rock upbeat, melodic, catchy, yet with an edge, then you need to hear this, it's brilliant. Drop my new favorite band a line at… (AD)

(Mauled by Tigers, dynamitearrows@gmail.com)

EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING – "Primary Colours" CD

Hurray! The second album from the fabulous EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING. I can't even begin to tell you how excited I was to have this in my hands. I haven't stopped listening to it. Another perfect collection of classic Australian punk sounds blended with some post-punkish elements to make a very unique and wonderful aural experience. The music is seemingly simplistic, but it hits all the right chords. The vocals are nonchalant, catchy, and seductive. My only complaint is the inclusion of the songs "You Let Me Be Honest With You" and "We'll Be Turned On" which I already have on 7", meaning I really only got eight new EDDY CURRENT SUPRESSION RING songs. If that's all I have to complain about I'll just shut the fuck up and be happy I got any new songs at all. I love this record. (CK)

(Aarght!, aarghtrecords@gmail.com)

THE ERGS! – "Dork Rock Cork Rod" LP

Dork Rock Cork Rod came out a while back, and was out of print for a good year or two. Don Giovanni Records has just repressed another batch of them and it looks like they are available again. This is probably my favorite stuff by the ERGS!, but be forewarned, this album drips of power-pop in every way. If you hate pop punk, this album could possibly be your worst enemy. I'm talking straight-up bubble gum songs about girls. And it sucks, 'cause these songs are so good. This album would be really easy to hate. It's kind of hard to admit I like this, but it's true—this is a good record. They write amazing riffs, and catch you with a never-ending assault of rad hooks. The record is very reminiscent of *Dookie*-era GREEN DAY, but imagine Rivers Cuomo writing the lyrics—and I mean modern day Rivers Cuomo. (FS)

(Don Giovanni, PO Box 628, Kingston, NJ 08528, www.dongiovannirecords.com)

THE ESTRANGED – "Static Thoughts" LP

The ESTRANGED EPs that came out over the last few months were good, but this the first full length release from Portland's THE ESTRANGED takes things up a notch to the territory of great. They take the dark chorused-out melodies that made THE WIPERS legendary, and inject some raw punk enthusiasm. Instead of resigned despair, we get a seething impassioned blitz of dark melodic post punk/post rock, to which I can only say, "fuck yes." (AA)

(Dirtnap, 2615 SE Clinton St, Portland, OR 97202, www.dirtnaprecs.com)

EVOLUTION SO FAR – "Dylar" CD

An "oil and water" situation, as this Italian band's second full-length CD seemingly attempts to fuse AC/DC-styled hard rock with a genre that, at its core, was anti-rock—late-'80s/early-'90s DC post-hardcore rock experimentation. From that uneven ground, these twelve tracks stop, start, and switch gears. Adding in Arabic rhythms, upbeat melodic hardcore, saxophone, wah pedal (or whatever studio effect) for half a minute, and then the scratchy, thin-vocaled singer incoherently starts blathering and shouting "shikaboom" all over the whole messy picture, whistling (!!) (a major crime in life or any recording, for the only person who ever enjoys the sound of whistling is the person whistling), and other vocal dork-offs between spitting out lyrics about anger and confusion. The recording is too limp for this type of music, lacking enough heft to the guitars to be forceful; it's just too all over the place to be considered "challenging." Ultimately delivering what shoulda, coulda, mighta rocked and then quickly diverting off into some other tangent as you scratch your head and wonder why, when ROSE TATTOO records, which do rock, are still available worldwide for under ten bucks, *why* anyone would bother with this? (KS)

(Area Pirata, www.areapirata.com)

FAMILY MAN – LP

This Berlin band has made the odd decision to name themselves after an instrumental/spoken word later BLACK FLAG record—and they wear the SST influence on their sleeve. FAMILY MAN reminds me of a bouncier late-era BLACK FLAG, and the vocalist has a hint

of Milo mixed with his Rollins vibe. The production and guitar tone are more modern and crunchy, which makes it less of a tribute, but doesn't result in a very engaging listen. While FAMILY MAN's songs are far from awful, nothing about them sticks with me past the initial listens. Right now, I can only recall the deadened mess of buzzy guitars and monotonous yelling, and while I may seem like some old hag irritated with her kid's choice of music, let me explain in simple terms. The riffs are bored and tired, and the production has the liveliness of sopping toast. I can see FAMILY MAN being a lot better if they weren't trying to mine the sounds of another scene/era or if they were less modern sounding, but something about their mix doesn't work. (CI)
(Behind the Scenes, Wrangelstr. 86 1.QG, 10097 Berlin, GERMANY, behindthescenes@web.de)

FEAR OF GOD – "The Hermaneutics of Fear of God by Dave Phillips" CD

Not sure what the deal is with the title but I can tell you that basically this seems to be a discography of FEAR OF GOD, although there is no information regarding where the tracks are from, what order, dates, etc. There is a booklet with minimal lyrics. Of course, FEAR OF GOD is awesome, but I look for a little more than this, especially in considering a band of their stature. Recent LP discographies have done them much better justice. (NM)
(Absurd, Caixa Postal 02, Osasco/SP, 06013-971 BRAZIL, www.absurd.com.br)

FEAR OF LIPSTICK – "I Don't Wanna Be Around" EP

A marked improvement over their last EP, which had too much of a GREEN DAY element to it, this release starts off with a catchy (though generic) '70s-style power-pop jam, followed by a few tunes that are right out of THE CLOROX GIRLS' playbook. Yeah, they're not breaking any new ground in pop punk, but they've got the chops and will keep your head a-boppin'. (PC)
(Fucking Scam, $7 ppd: Eric Daigle, 161 1/2 Dufferin St, Moncton NB, E1C 1Z4, CANADA)

FIRST CUT / LET ME OUT – split CD

This is a split of two hardcore bands out of Europe. The first, LET ME OUT, has that new youth crew sound that is similar to THE FIRST STEP and GET THE MOST. I think the frontman is going for a kind of Kevin Seconds vocal style, but it comes off more like the vocalist of H2O. The other band, FIRST CUT, has more of a hard and heavy modern hardcore sound. Reminds me of HOLDING ON after they released a record on Bridge Nine. (PL)
(Akashic c/o Mukasoi 1058, Hashimoto, Wakayma, 648-0025 JAPAN, www.myspace.com/akashicrecs)

FISHNET STALKERS – "Twelve Roses" EP

Clichéd glam-punk that might have worked in the heydays of the '70s, but just sounds forced, tired, and redundant in the silicon era of Apple laptops, iPods, and eBay. Rod Stewart haircuts, drug reverences, and the odd Johnny Thunders guitar lick just seems so out of place compared to the raging hardcore of NEEDLES, the infectious punk of MARKED MEN, and the choppy working class art of AIRFIX KITS. If I'm not making any sense, which I normally don't, I'll cut to the chase; stacked up against all the greatness that punk rock is throwing up nowadays, this record sucks the back of my… (SD)
(Reptilian, 2545 N. Howard Street, Baltimore, MD 21218, www.reptilianrecords.com)

FIX-IT – "Kill Kill Kill" LP

Kill Kill Kill is a cool album. FIX-IT is a French band that takes enormous influence from late-'70s Southern California punk. For fans of CIRCLE JERKS or ADOLESCENTS. The guitars shred pretty hard. This is catchy stuff with snotty vocals. Even after the novelty wears off of hearing someone sing "go fuck yourself" in a French accent, it's still good. A solid record for sure. (FS)
(Born Bad, bornbadrecords@wanadoo.fr)

FLAWS – "Erect Nation" LP

Another post-hardcore record for me this month, but FLAWS has managed to inject their sound with enough surprises to transcend genre and keep things interesting. It's in the vocals that they take the most chances: the singing almost sounds choral. At times I'm indirectly reminded of SHUDDER TO THINK (without the falsetto). The band definitely courts comparison with a variety of later-period Dischord artistes, but in a good way. I like it. (AM)
(Obscurist Press, PO Box 13077, Gainesville, FL 32604-1077, obscurist.press@gmail.com)

THE FLIP-TOPS – "Dangerous Game" EP

Woah, all right! Two new originals and a cover of THE SIMPLETONES' "TV Love." These PDX-ers are all right with me. Got me bopping my head up and down and shaking it side to side. These are some damn catchy tunes. I could listen to a whole LP of this. (RR)
(Plastic Idol, www.plasticidolrecords.com)

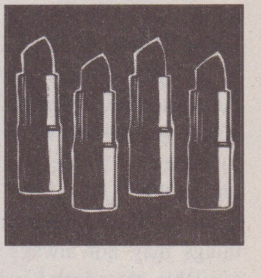
THE FOUR SLICKS – "In Bonneville" LP

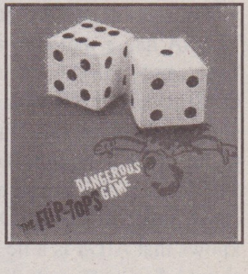
Imagine what you might get if you took an American punk with a love of rockabilly, threw him into Paris (France, not Texas), and surrounded him with a bunch of like-minded Frenchmen. If you're to struggling imagine that, all you really need to do is pick up this slab. Seriously, this is well-done rockabilly, delivered with some punk rock energy and attitude. If my math is right, you've got thirteen tracks, with the majority of them covers of BO DIDDLEY, HASIL ADKINS, and such. This is good shit and catchy enough that you might work up a little sweat tapping your toes. (KK)
(Slick, www.myspace.com/thefourslicks)

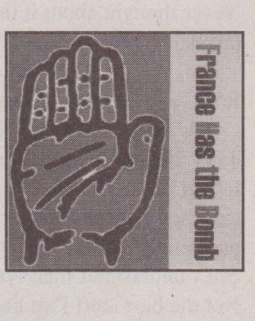
IV REICH – "Sucio Policia" 2xEP

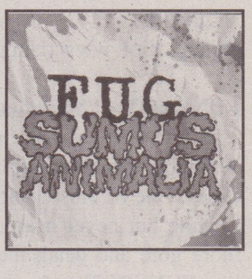
IV REICH is a legendary Spanish punk band that finally gets a proper vinyl release. This band's music has spread like a virus infecting the minds of punks all over the world, especially in Latin American countries. I have heard inaudible dubs of these songs over the years that were transferred from tapes twelve generations later. This is furious and amazing punk/hardcore shit. I love it! "Sucia Policia" (which translates to dirty/corrupt police) is a classic! Thanks to Desobediencia for getting this out, it is absolutely mandatory! (MS)
(Desobediencia, desobediencia2000@yahoo.com.mx)

Presagio de muerte
DELIRIUM TREMENS









FRANCE HAS THE BOMB – "World of Mirrors/Cold Hands"

Catchy, garage-y, up-tempo punk with elements of everything from early post-punk (e.g. WIRE at their poppiest) to ELASTICA. There's a healthy amount of hooks here, and my toes are tapping as I type. Nice! Now they just gotta find someone else to do their artwork and layout, and I'm sold… (CS)

(Dusty Medical, PO Box 1981, Milwaukee, WI 53201, www.dustymedical.com)

FREEDUMB / GOTTEMIA – split EP

Every time I see one shitty record I think of the wasted resources and remaining 499 or 999 copies that nobody will ever want or care about. It makes the eagle cry. FREEDUMB sounds like NOFX if they were German crusties, which is sort of like ammonia and bleach; while these things may not always be the best cleansers available, they each have their merits in certain situations. Mix them together and you have a noxious gas not fit for the human senses. GOTTEMIA has a melodic, mid-paced sound with "ooh and ahh" back-up vocals a la THE OBSERVERS. They don't waste your time singing about how sad they are, though—listen to this lyrical miracle from the track entitled "HIV": "I hope everyone with HIV goes the same way as Freddy Mercury / Everybody knows that AIDS is a lie / Everyone with AIDS should fuck off and die." Yeah, good point. Never thought about it that way… (SE)

(Wrestling,www.myspace.com/wrestlingrecords)

F.U.G. – "Sumus Animalia" EP

F.U.G. is an early-'80s-sounding hardcore band out of Italy that's reminiscent of ILL REPUTE and DRI. It's probably just the fact that they are from Italy, but the lyrics are mind-numbingly dumb. I would rather hear lyrics I can't understand than lyrics as stupid as these. Not the best stuff I've heard, but worth a listen. Also worth a listen are fellow Italians ANTI-YOU. (PL)

(Rising Riot, www.risingrecords.com)

FUNEROT – "Stranded in Time" EP

Sci-fi speed metal from Olympia, Washington with crossover and hardcore influences. One of those bands I've heard about for a while but never heard. I expected this to be more gore and death metal with a band name like FUNEROT and one of the band members wearing a GHOUL shirt, but this sounds like a speed metal or crossover band from the late '80s with lots of guitar solos that remind me of SLAYER. Maybe it's the way the vocals are barked, but I hear a hardcore influence. Oh, and a WEIRD AL YANKOVIC cover! Think CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER meets THE ACCÜSED. This is darn good metal and despite the references I mention, FUNEROT is not retro sounding. (MH)

(Maggot Mind, www.bistrodistro.com)

GAS – "1982-1986 Gas" LP

This record contains eighteen tracks by Hiroshima's GAS, and as the title states, these songs were released in the early-to-late '80s. Throughout this time, the band's style changed dramatically. The songs from their first flexi, *No More Hiroshima*, are simple, bouncy, and agitated—somewhat reminiscent of THE STALIN. These tracks had me jumping around in my chair. The second recording shows a darker, more metal influence and a new vocalist named Narumi, who fluctuates from a tough sound to a squeaky-mouse style. At this point, GAS was still firmly rooted in punk despite the vaguely metallic guitar sound/style. By the time they recorded their third record, they had fully embraced their metal leanings with shredding guitars, sung vocals, and longer, plodding songs. These tracks are less interesting, but there are still a couple of cool tracks from this session, and—let's be honest—most early-'80s bands were already well past their peak at this point. The first side of the collection features enough killer punk hits to make this one a keeper. (CI)

(Partners in Crime, 3213 NE MLK Boulevard, Suite C, Portland, OR 97212, www.brickwall records.com)

THE GIDDY AUNTS – CD

I have to come clean—I had this CD to review last month, but I blew it off. After reviewing a bunch of other records, I left this one for last and just didn't have the energy to spend time with it. It's just a really uninspiring album to look at and listen to. The front cover is nothing but a picture of a refrigerator and the band name, the back cover has nothing but the names of the songs and a bar code, and the insert only gives the band members' names and assigns credit for who wrote which song. Come on guys, put a little effort into it. You care enough about your band to put out a CD, so at least make me think you give a shit about what you put out. You know what I think when I look at a CD like this? I think it's going to sound like dogshit. I'm not saying you got to have your records look professional. That's stupid. There are lots of kinds of "not giving a shit." There's the kind of "not giving a shit" you feel towards your parents not liking your tri-hawk, and there's the kind of "not giving a shit" you feel towards a book report you have to do. That's what I mean; you made your CD look like a piece of crap homework assignment. But, I'm not an art critic, I'm a record reviewer, so this month I put aside whatever pre-conceptions I had, and listened to the CD, twice. And you know what, it was terrible. It sounded like dogshit. So GIDDY AUNTS, step back and take a look at your shit, and think, "If I didn't know these guys, would I think this looks interesting or sounds interesting?" Don't use every idea you have and turn it into a song. Sometimes you'll have a good idea, sometimes bad. You're obviously talented musicians, it wouldn't blow me away if I found a 7" by you guys in my box a year from now and it turned out to good. You just can't take a bunch of songs that you didn't put much effort into making, package it in a case that took no imagination to construct, and expect people to trade money for it. (FS)

(Wisconsin Punk, 315 Mead St, Eau Claire, WI 54703)

GIRLS OF THE GRAVITRON – "Malthusian Lovesong" EP

Fans of the criminally overlooked Memphis band KAZALOK might recognize these GIRLS, who share key members and carry the sound to the next logical progression. Things are more refined and somber this go-around. Acoustic guitars over copious noise and echo, comparable to the work of GREG ASHLEY...which means the punk-o level is really goddamn low. If you're at all familiar with this new crop of Memphis weirdo rock, you're all over this. (MC)

(Boom Chick, www.boomchickrecords.com)

GOLDEN ERROR – LP

This is like a brattier, car-park-puke-flavored FIRE ENGINES, with the bite and sharp wit removed. It's got the fractured guitar of the Scottish post-punk ideal but replaces desolate industrial landscapes with suburban alienation. For some reason, this makes me think of kids in brigh-colored hooded sweatshirts hanging out by cars in desolate towns with like BRANIAC and ASSEMBLY PEOPLE PROGRAM mix-tapes on the car stereo. They are actually based in Brooklyn and play perky-as-fuck pop-inflected post-punk, with nods to the FALL or the late-'90s DC post-punk revival. It's not terrible or anything, but just seems kind of neutered compared to, say, the MONORCHID, who I would way rather listen to than this. Not that these kids are close to that musical territory necessarily, but I think the MONORCHID managed to channel similar influences into a more effective, exciting, and innovative end. I could imagine a crowd of college kids losing their shit over GOLDEN ERROR at a kegger at some warehouse in Greenpoint though. (LG)

(Shandi, PO Box 110076, Brooklyn, NY 11211)

GOODBYE SLUGGO – "Frampton Comes Alive" CD

GOODBYE SLUGGO made me think of FOUNTAINS OF WAYNE-meets-CLETUS-meets-J-CHURCH-meets-THE WEAKERTHANS, but all with a few chromosomes too many. Not that it's horrible—it is actually so-so

pop-punk—but they seem to revel in the fact that "we're amateurish and don't care if we sing out of tune and that makes us crazy." Sometimes that can be an endearing quality and sometimes an annoying one. GOODBYE SLUGGO treads that fine line. Maybe I'm being a little too harsh. There are a couple of OK songs on here, "Maryanne/Jane (Sue)" being my favorite. Check out their website and then call me an overly-critical dick. (RK)
(self-released, www.goodbyesluggo.com)

GRAVE ROBBER – "Be Afraid" CD

This is the stupidest shit I've encountered in a long time. GRAVE ROBBER is a Christian horror-rock band. All of their songs are about zombies, fiends, skeletons, and the like, and the sentiment is influenced by the words of Jesus Christ. The music mixes THE MISFITS with some crap youth radio rock. Listening to *Be Afraid* reminds that I really fucking hate people and all the rubbish that they consistently create. Ugh. Christians suck and this music is even worse. (CI)
(Retroactive, www.retroactiverecords.com)

GRINDING HALT – "Sprookjeshof" LP

With an extremely creepy and great front cover of a decaying Snow White statue, *Sprookejeshof* (which translates to "The Garden of Fairy Tales"), the debut album from this Dutch band featuring ex-members of SHIKARI and LAST MILE, lifts HIS HERO IS GONE-ish moody quiet guitar intros and interspersed downbeat, but the overall attack is much more like a more-severe version of that band's contemporaries, ICE 9, with low-end rumbling, inventive hardcore that never quite degrades to "screamo," but throttles with the same intensity, inventiveness, and shrieked vocals. Lyrics attack religion, Dutch nationalism, and other topics, making for a boss debut! Cool! (KS)
(self-released, www.grindinghalt.nl)

HEADACHE CITY – "Hey Ugly" EP

Look gang, a single that sounds like a single (well, there are three songs, so *MRR* policy officially classifies it an EP). "Teenage Grease" is a very appealing glam/pub/punk (for lack of a better hybrid expression) song that's maybe what EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS would have sounded like if they were American and trying to sound more like THE RAMONES (in the positive sense). "Hey Ugly" has a catchy and suitably dumb hook driven into the ground (where catchy and dumb hooks belong), and "Butterfly My Heart" is even better. Good job, kids. (DD)
(HoZac, www.myspace.com/headachecity)

HELLHOLE – "Uppers/Downers" EP

This is a record by an enigmatic band. No address, no lyrics, nothing that tells you where HELLHOLE is from. The layout adds even more to the mystery, in that it looks like it could be some sort of hipster noise project. The first side, "Uppers," displays the band's hardcore side. These three songs are fast, chaotic, and non-traditional in the sense that they don't sound like every other band that wishes they were from the '80s. The second side, "Downers," shows HELLHOLE's ability to play slow stoner metal that reminds me a little of NEUROSIS. (PL)
(Don Giovanni, PO Box 628, Kingston, NJ 08528, www.dongiovannirecords.com)

HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE – "Mondo Blotto" LP

Wow, this band has been around for years and I've never really paid them much attention despite the fact that people love 'em. After just listening to a couple of these tracks, I can already tell you that I am the one that has been missing out—this is some good shit. Large part hardcore/punk with small part DEVO—100% catchy. Nineteen or twenty songs for your listening pleasure. (KK)
(Alien Snatch, Danziger Str. 1, I0435 Berlin, GERMANY)

HIPBONE SLIM AND THE KNEE TREMBLERS – "The Sheik Said Shake" CD

A surfy rockabilly band comprised of the former Sir Bald Diddley, WILDEBEESTS bassist John Gibbs, and the legendary drummer Bruce Brand (THEE MILKSHAKES, THEE HEADCOATS, THEE MIGHTY CESARS, MASONICS, et al). They invoke the soul of ELVIS (the early years) and Sun Studios. It's very authentic sounding for some guys not from the Southern states or the '50s. (CK)
(Voodoo Rhythm, www.voodoorhythm.com)

HOSTAGECALM – "Lens" CD

Sounding like something that could be on Fat Wreck Chords, HOSTAGECALM mixes melodic hardcore punk and modern hardcore. Their sound is almost metal with KID DYNAMITE-styled vocals. The musicianship is good, but I think it lacks a little bit in creativity. (PL)
(Redscroll, www.redscrollrecords.com)

HUMAN GARBAGE – "Man Has Fallen" CD

Not sure if this band is named after the NAPALM DEATH track or not. Their logo sort of looks like the aforementioned's older logo, but that's where the similarity ends. Five mid-paced, hard-edged rocking numbers that have slight melodic tinges to them. Coming though like a heavier early SENSE FIELD with rougher vocals and not as sing-a-long-y, or maybe if BLUETIP and HOT WATER MUSIC were a bit metallic it might sound like this. The title track and "The Last Chapter" are the standouts here, with subject matter dealing with self-doubt, life cut short, and faith (or lack of) in others. Good effort. (JH)
(self-released, c/o Jay Eleuterio, 508 Furby, Winnipeg, MB, CANADA, R3B-2U8, www.myspace.com/humangarbagewpg)

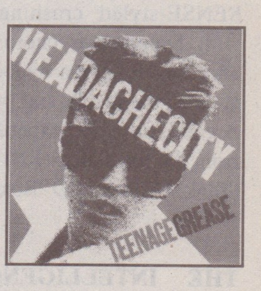
INSTÄNGD – "Konkret Och Brutal" EP

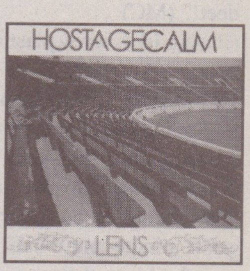
This ear-shattering, blown-out mess is some of the best sounding hardcore to come out of Scandinavia since AMDI PETERSENS ARMÉ. INSTÄNGD is a bit of a departure from half the members' other band, REGULATIONS. It's loud and fast and is more reminiscent of traditional Scandinavian hardcore. Definitely top-ten material. (PL)
(Adult Crash, PO Box 604, 2200 Copenhagen, DENMARK, www.adult-crash.com)

INSTANT ASSHOLE / MOUTH SEWN SHUT – split EP

INSTANT ASSHOLE drops four tracks from the same session as their recent *DUI or Die* EP. Similar to THE FIXTURES in its ram-charging hardcore assault with wild vocals, but with the one-two power of Bill from STRUNG

STRANDED IN TIME





INSTANT ASSHOLE
MOUTH SEWN SHUT

UP and BORN/DEAD behind the drums, the attack is much more straight-ahead with a few metallic flourishes book-ending the chaos. Local legend JOHN THE BAKER spits lyrics from the offbeat corner of p-u-n-k that INSTANT ASSHOLE always inhabits, covering everything from skull-fucking zombies to idiots to their no-rules approach to punk rock. On the flip, Boston's MOUTH SEWN SHUT has two more tracks of burly, LOGICAL NONSENSE-styled crushing mid-tempo charge, with hyperactive choruses and gruff vocals attacking religious hypocrisy and urging defiance of the media and politician's world-view. A good, fun split, expertly packaged as always from the folks at… (KS)
(Tank Crimes, PO Box 3495, Oakland, CA 94609)

THE INTELLIGENCE – "Debt & ESP/Chateau Bandit"

Countless releases have already put INTELLIGENCE honcho Lars F's name on the short list of fellows whose every move you must follow...he's just got the golden touch. This Plastic Idol 45 is a perfect snapshot of THE INTELLIGENCE: one bedroom plodder akin to the *Boredom and Terror* sound, and an up-tempo wind-up a la the *Icky Baby* year(s). The off-pop of THE INTELLIGENCE has been gaining quite a bit of steam in many circles and it's no wonder. I can't stop singing "C-h-a-t-eau Bandeet!" (MC)
(Plastic Idol, www.plasticidolrecords.com)

INVASIÓN – "La Caza" LP

So I thought the first INVASIÓN LP was amazing, but the gents from Barcelona have really stepped up the game with this release. This record is positively crushing! It takes a good minute-and-a-half for the repetitive two-note build-up that opens *La Caza* to lead into the first song, but the tension and anticipation that it creates are well worth it. INVASIÓN crafts their songs around simple, mid-paced, three-chord riffs, but it's in the details where the doom and claustrophobia is birthed—a heavy delay on the vocals, real solid drumming, and experimental/noise parts occasionally layered over the songs. The high-watermark has been set for dark, experimental hardcore. I tell you what, there has been at least one contender every month so far, but this is hands-down the best record of the year thus far. (JU)
(La Vida es un Mus, www.lavidaesunmus.com)

JUGGLING JUGULARS – "Salute to No One" LP

Somehow, only the Europeans can pull this off: killer hardcore with male/female vocals that are both melodic and tough as fuck. They don't really sound like POST REGIMENT, but I think of them in the same vein: political, relentless, and not afraid to really *sing*. Ever since their split with INNER CONFLICT a few years ago, JUGGLING JUGULARS has done no wrong. (PC)
(Kämäset Levyt, Vallikatu 28 A 2, 33240 Tampere, FINLAND, www.punkinfinland.net/kamanen)

KANSALAISTOTTELEMATTOMUUS – "Full Spectrum" CD

And to answer your question, that *is* actually the band's name, although it is one I am guessing only a Finnish tongue would dare try to pronounce! KANSALAISTOTTELEMATTOMUUS plays tight, raw HC punk with an intense '80s thrash metal influence as well as some predictable echoes of their Suomi brethren. KAAOS, KREATOR, and maybe TERVEET KÄDET? I dunno, but it works for me! (NM)
(Musta Lokki Osk, Fallpakankuja 3 A 10, 00970 Helsinki, FINLAND, www.mustalokki.org)

LADIES – "I'm the Worst" EP

I'm sure THE LADIES are a pretty cool local band to check out on a Friday night before drunkenly trying to catch fireflies if you live in Richmond, VA. But if you don't live in their 'hood, it kinda sounds like a million other bands that are pretty decent, but not gonna change your life for the better. The best tune is a twelve-second anti-god rant that's short and sweet. The other four songs are pretty rockin', but just don't have that little extra something that changes it from a decent song to a good song. Lyrically, this won't please the PC punk crowd, but as the singer points out in the first song, he's the worst. Lyrics about girls being "good enough tonight" don't personally offend me, but also ain't nothing new despite the seemingly intended shock value reaction. On the same note, the band uses the Nazi SS rune to replace the "s" in their name. This is also presumably for shock value, but it's also used on a million other records, and looks really dumb over the image of a monster holding a chick in a bikini with fake blood on both sides of the sleeve. Leave the Nazi runes for the real Nazis. Is nothing sacred? (MU)
(Riff Raff, 200 S. Mulberry Street, Richmond, VA 23220)

LE FACE – "Salvador Dali" EP

I was trying to figure out what this sounded *exactly* like while listening to the A-side. The post-apocalyptic, dispassionate, snarled vocals, the recorded-in-a-meat-locker feel… That mystery A-side sound is an Orange County generated version of the noise idea created by FLIPPER; the bass line is a straight FLIPPER rip, note for note. The lyrics intone a Salvador Dali quote or two over and over until you're happy you no longer live in the OC. "Isolation," on the flipside, is a shitty little gassed-in-thee-garage, Killed by Death claustrophobic affair. "No Scene" is a similarly-minded lament… "We've got no scene, we got no scene." This is the sound of a house show at 3:00 a.m., lurching 'round, trying to figure out how you got there and how you're gonna leave. Men in shriveled suits puking on their dates, and someone puts on a BLACK RANDY 7". Watch your back. (LG)
(Rich Bitch, www.myspace.com/iwannabearichbitch)

LEMURIA – "Get Better" CD

These guys are like a punkier '90s indie rock band. Great pop along the lines of SUPERCHUNK, PIXIES, and the BLAKE BABIES. This is their first full-length of new material and it's not much different from their collection of EPs and splits. I'm surprised how "in" they are in the punk scene considering their sound. One of the year's best. (RL)
(Asian Man, www.asianmanrecords.com)

LINTERNO – "Take the Train of Your Soul" CD

It's fitting that the word "train" is in the title because the *Don't Miss the Train* album by NO USE FOR A NAME immediately comes to mind when listening to this. I couldn't stand most of those overly produced and melodic punk bands of the '90s, but as with everything, there were the exceptions like early NO USE FOR A NAME and STRIKE ANYWHERE, and these Italians come off more like that. Still, the high production values and perfect sing-along choruses kind of wear thin on me after a few songs. The lyrics are pretty well-written on the personal front, and the music sure is tight, but I don't know, maybe it's just a bit too tight and too clean for me to really get into it. *MRR* readers who secretly like the better of the Warped Tour punk bands should check this out. (BG)
(Chorus of One, www.chorusofonerecords.it)

LOSER X – "Underground Idiots" EP

The first track on this EP, "Underground Idiots," I could have sworn was a cover of DAG NASTY's "Trying" until the chorus came in. It's kinda ridiculous. Upon closer inspection, I don't think it's purely coincidence either with the note-for-note carbon copy GORILLA BISCUITS breakdown and other tribute-esque instances found in the lyrics; "think no more, *flex your head*…" and "don't talk to me, it's *my war*!" place all evidence on the table that these Japanese punkers are 100% paying homage to all previous eras of US hardcore. Very reminiscent of TOTAL FURY but not really "there." Quite a change of pace for Snuffy Smiles. (JU)
(Snuffy Smiles, 12-A Kamikousaicho, Shichiku, Kita-ku, Kyoto 603-8117 JAPAN)

MANIAX – "The Lost Tapes" CD

Ultra-catchy, lo-fi, thrashy bedroom punk from three fourteen-year-olds, recorded on a hand-held mic and a boombox. One of MANIAX songs was on MRR's *Not So Quiet on the Western Front* comp; the rest of this has never seen the light of day (with the exception of some stuff that aired on MRR radio decades ago), which is a shame because most of this is pretty fucking great. Sonically, it's kind of along the lines of the first GERMS 7". They refer to some of the songs as having a "minimalist Black Flag" sound, which makes sense. Imagine something on a *Hyped 2 Death* comp coming from a punk/thrash background instead the new wave/rock 'n' roll scene. Apparently BLACK FLAG and FLIPPER wanted to take the band on tour, but they were too young. "Slit Wrists" and "Wendy O." are hits. Highly recommended. (P$)

(Palo Alto, 110 Fairfax Avenue A11-116, Los Angeles, CA 90036, www.maniaxmusic.com)

MARCHING ORDERS – "Last Train Home" 10"

They don't mess around in the land down under. Every skinhead release coming from that far-flung continent has me almost diving into the nether regions of my closet to dig out my ol' Ben Shermans, and MARCHING ORDERS is no exception. Five fist-pumping anthems played super tight, loud, aggressive, and fast, but still holding tight to the melody that made this genre so popular back in the early '80s. Hints of the first SWINGIN' UTTERS long-player, with a touch of THE KRAYS and a dash of some of that UK82 spiky-ness. Another bunch of solid Australian Oi!, boys. (SD)

(Longshot, 980 Harrison St, San Francisco, CA 94107, www.longshotmusic.com)

MARVELOUS DARLINGS – "The Swords, the Streets/Galloway"

Two new songs of upbeat power-pop goodness. There's a high-energy pub-rock/glitter feel to the A-side, like they've been listening to their DR. FEELGOOD and SLADE records. The singer can actually sing, but his delivery is pure punk rock. This is not some retro throwback, just classic songwriting. Great single. (AM)

(Wall Ride, www.wallriderecords.com)

MASSTRAUMA – "The Adoration of the Devil's Ass" EP

Fuck yes! The Australian hardcore behemoth MASSTRAUMA has unleashed a blistering new EP for you punks! These wound-up punks assault your senses on many levels! You are confronted by various and sundry hardcore weapons! On side A, this EP squirms and boils through "Vultures," "Out of Control," "Rank Organization," and arrives at the hardcore anthem, "Daggers." This is a fucking great song! Turn this over, and you get four more blood-curdling hardcore blasts. "Catch and Snitch" bludgeons you into submission! "Sudden Impact" finishes all the punks off in fine style! You fucks should get this record! (BR)

(Endless Blockades, PO Box 3023, South Brisbane BC, QLD 4101, AUSTRALIA)

THE MEASURE [SA] – "Means To an End" EP

In the same way that *Rogues March*-era AMERICAN STEEL was pulling from soul music but wasn't soul-punk (or derivative) and Greg Ginn was into SABBATH but early FLAG wasn't stoner-punk (or derivative), the MEASURE [SA] seems to be playing folk-influenced punk that defies categorization as folk-punk (or being derivative). The tunes are solid, to put it mildly, and so are the lyrics. When a glut of shitty folk punk was all over, this band opened up the windows and let some air in. Kind of like if DISCOUNT was better, and a little more into WOODY GUTHRIE. Great stuff, and recommended. (P$)

(Salinas, c/o Marc Reosti, PO Box 02802, Detroit, MI 48202, www.unshadowed.com/salinas)

MELENA – "Murretaan Ja Vallataan!" CD

Whoa. Finnish hardcore with post-punk saxophone skronkage. Fuck yeah. Somehow, it's totally bringing me back to LINK 80 shows when I was a young pup. But the saxophone is way more LORA LOGIC style than ska-punk style. It's mostly lady vocals, and every once in a while some dude chimes in with almost cookie-monster vocals but not so bark-y. I could do without the cookie monster dude, but he doesn't appear too much. Man, this is so ska-punk, but not in a lame way because it leans toward a more hardcore sound and then with the un-ska sounding sax it's pretty and exciting. And totally in Finnish. (MM)

(Musta Lokki osk, Fallpakankuja 3 A 10, 00970 Helsinki, FINLAND, www.mustalokki.org)

MR. MOUSTACHE – "Staring at the Sun" CD

A French band that sounds like a more melodic early/mid NEUROSIS. It doesn't get too heavy, and there're enough tempo changes and hooks to keep things interesting. This sounds pretty good. I don't think they're hardcore or crusty dudes at all, I think they're more heavy-end of indie rock—some songs are downright indie pop and don't even sound like the same band at all. This is a strange one. Leave it to the French to muddle things up. I'll give it an inventive thumbs-up. (AD)

(DVS, 214 Rue Frederick Sevene, 33400 Talence, FRANCE)

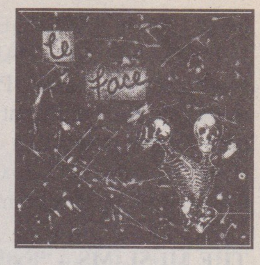
MUDDY RIVER NIGHTMARE BAND – "Polish This" CD

Man, I had this funny joke all lined up to make fun of this, but it's unexpectedly freakin' good so now I can't. You see, I was assuming this was going to be some crud since there is a picture of a pile of shit on the cover, and I was going to say how appropriate the artwork is, blah, blah, blah, but instead I'm sitting here listening to and enjoying some catchy and original punk that sounds like pieces of NORMAN BATES & THE SHOWERHEADS, ANTISEEN, CRAMPS, *Legacy*-era MISFITS, and maybe later-period POISON IDEA. Not one song has the same influence as the next. The styles are all over the place, but everything kind of flows together, and you will not get bored before the album is through. I judged a book by its cover and I've been proved wrong. Rock and roll! (BG)

(Last Chance, PO Box 42396, Portland, OR 97242, www.lastchancerecords.net)

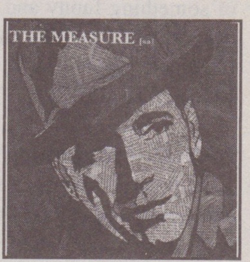
MUDLARKS – CD

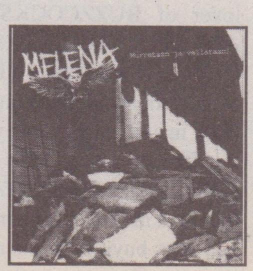
This Italian band with a female singer plays old-school



MARVELOUS DARLINGS
THE SWORDS, THE STREETS

MASSTRAUMA





punk. Think AVENGERS, GOOPS, and HOLLY AND THE ITALIANS, with a little swamp blues in the mix. Pretty tough-sounding; these guys had a different singer in their earlier days. Decent punk. (RL)

(Puke 'n' Vomit, PO Box 3435, Fullerton, CA 92834, www.pukenvomitrecords.com)

THE MUSLIMS – "Extinction/My Flash On You"

I'd heard enough good things about THE MUSLIMS' (the press sheet adds "the," so I will too) 12" that I'd been meaning to lend an ear to it, then in an act of serendipity, this 45 lands in my review pile. "Minimal rock/rough pop" says the promo sheet before going on to reference WARSAW, VELVET UNDERGROUND, and MODERN LOVERS. Yeah, I'll buy that, even if there's not the ingredient X genius of early VELVETS or early (i.e. real) MODERN LOVERS. It's pretty darned good (pulling off a cover of "My Flash on You" by making it slower than most versions is a bold move), but I'm going to guess that they must have better up their sleeves and that this is another case of a single that's more like a leftover album track. I'm still going to seek out the 12". (DD)

(Sweet Tooth, 1741 30th St, San Diego, CA 92102, www.sweettoothrecords.com)

NAKED RAYGUN – "Throb Throb" LP

It's hard for me to write about this record. It's such a classic and defines a certain era of American music so totally. *Throb Throb* built on NAKED RAYGUN's already genre-making sound, with new guitarist John Haggerty's distinctive style and the anthemic songwriting. It set the pace for what would be termed "the Chicago Sound." Now you see it's fucking hard to write about a record like this without sounding like a rock critic on boring pills. NAKED RAYGUN has a sound that makes you feel part of something funny and cool, something angry and incisive. Buy this and start a band. (LG)

(Haunted Town, 3057 N. Rockwell Street, Chicago, IL 60618)

NANOX – "Repetition" EP

This record bounces with enough new wave and power-pop dance-floor jerk to set any lost teenage dreamer alight. Three tracks of super infectious, '79-influenced skinny-tie punk that should be on the want list of any collector and lover of BUZZCOCKS, THE BOYS, THE ADVERTS, RUDI, FAST CARS, and THE OUTCASTS, to name a few. Keyboards add an extra flare and dimension to a sound so rich and thick in authenticity that you'd have to be a raging fool of a very high order to miss out on. NANOX, along with STATUES, has made this month, a month to remember. Now stop reading and start buying. Top ten of the year…maybe, just maybe, I won't kill Floyd. (SD)

(Shit Sandwich, www.shitsandwichrecords.com)

NICE FACE – "Thing in My Head" EP

I'm hearing some of the catchy synth weirdness of BLANK DOGS, with a little of the more rock aspects of maybe NOTHING PEOPLE, and a marginally audible bathed-in-distortion sound to the vocals kind of similar to the EAT SKULL LP I reviewed last month. If you're into BLANK DOGS or any of the stuff on Siltbreeze/Sacred Bones, you'll probably want to check NICE FACE out. Delightful. (P$)

(Sacred Bones, www.sacredbonesrecords.com)

NIGHT TERROR – "Stalker" EP

The initial blast of this debut outing by Pittsburgh's NIGHT TERROR is a drawn-out, mildly mosh-y, southern-fried stoner-metal odyssey, reminiscent at times of EYEHATEGOD, that eventually finds space in the smog for grizzly bear vocals. While the A-side of this EP remains on the doom-y, not-quite-slow-enough-to-be-molasses-like but still relatively sloth-y end of things, the B-side opts for a more punchy and driving approach to the metallic doom that fills every groove of this record. What I really like about this is that the band's playing-ability is top notch but they didn't go for some slick production, and for this the record really benefits. (JU)

(Hashshashin, PO Box 42259, Pittsburgh, PA 15203, hashshashinrecords@gmail.com)

NO FUCKER – "Conquer the Innocent" EP

Whoa, this record begins with the bass-intro to "War System" by the SHITLICKERS. In fact, it sounds like they re-recorded the entire song but added their own sparsely sung lyrics. This new EP is a fucking beast. From the blown-out recording to the distorted guitars, this band is easily the modern equivalent to the above-mentioned Swedish heroes. Five songs total on this ripper, with the lyrics printed on the back cover. NO FUCKER is the USA's finest entry into the international distorted-D-beat Olympics… Go for the gold and buy this record. (VL)

(No Real Music, 1104 Hart St, Utica, NY 13502)

NOISEAR – "Pyroclastic Annhiallation" CD

One of the best grindcore bands going these days. This CD has a handful of different sounds going on. There are tracks that are raw, straightforward old-school grind and then there are more technical grindcore tracks. I've seen others compare them to DISCORDANCE AXIS, which I don't think is that far off, and on this CD, the last six tracks are DISCORDANCE AXIS covers. I don't think these songs are on the LP. They also throw in a HAIL OF RAGE cover. I like this so much I'm having trouble describing it or finding words. Fast, tight, discordant, and pissed grindcore. Think LETHARGY, GRIDE, etc. Their drummer has played with PHOBIA, KILL THE CLIENT, and a few others. I can't get over how good the new tracks are, definitely one of my favorite releases of the year. If you are going to pick up one grindcore CD in 2008, get this. (MH)

(RSR, c/o Sandro Gessner, Strasse des Friedens 45, 07819 Mittelpoellnitz, GERMANY)

NOTHING PEOPLE – "Anonymous" LP

I read somewhere that a bunch of hipster garage rock critics are praising the shit out of NOTHING PEOPLE. Well, someone please add me to that list. But this ain't your run-of-the-mill garage rock. In fact, it's not even in that genre. The band that pops immediately into my mind is RED LORRY YELLOW LORRY, except without the pounding drum machine rhythms. NOTHING PEOPLE has a goth feel with extra echo-y vocals. The music is dark, robotic, and droning. It's the other '80s new wave. This is music made by the uncool kids, but the cool crowd has finally accepted them. Hurray. (CK)

(S-S, 1114 21st St, Sacramento, CA 95811)

NO TURNING BACK – "Stronger" CD

The Dutch equivalent to CARRY ON and AMERICAN NIGHTMARE? Not quite, maybe because in my opinion those guys set the bar so fucking high it's going to be near impossible to top. But NO TURNING BACK are pretty good contenders. Solid, punchy songs dealing with the usual topics. Although not blazing any new territory with this release, it's a bit more interesting than 90% of what passes as hardcore on these shores lately. (JH)

(Reflections, Klarendalseweg, 456-457, 6822 GW Arnhem, NETHERLANDS, www.reflectionsrecords.com)

NUDE PUBE BANGLERS – "Juggernaut" CD

They have a sound that is a blend of the rockin' riffs of TURBONEGRO combined with the catchy hardcore of *Built to Last*-era SICK OF IT ALL. The vocals are more on the Lou Koller side rather than the Hank von Helvete one. More like Lou and an angry Ian MacKaye mixed together, singing the rock-oriented vocal lines of GLUECIFER. "Day by Day" and "No Time" were absolute ragers. Pick this one up and turn the volume up high. (RK)

(Chorus of One, www.myspace.com/chorusofonerecords)

ORIGIN OF [M] – CD

I've listened to this CD three times now, and I am compelled to play it a fourth. Here it goes… What we have is a seven-song debut (?)

featuring Guy, former bassist of Japanese hardcore stalwarts GUDON and proprietor of Bloodsucker Records, and members of bands NEVER AGAIN and ASPHALT, playing in-your-face, heavy, driving Japanese hardcore. I tried to think of similar bands and FORWARD immediately came to my mind, so I threw on the *While You Alive* LP and realized that they're not all that similar. Both bands feature fast hardcore songs and slower, heavier songs, but that's about all the comparisons I feel I'm qualified to make. Where FORWARD is thrash, ORIGIN OF [M] is more rock. (I thought the chorus to the first track—a slower heavier one—was going to be "It's rock 'n' ro-ll, *hey!*") Of course the musicianship is top-notch, and the fast tracks on this are the standouts. Guy screams like a maniac, and the guitarist plays real cool, intricate guitar leads and some really rocking solos. But the slower, heavier tracks had me scratching my head at times. They're great, but they almost sound like a different band, playing occasionally off-time songs driven by the bassist followed by a "noodling" guitarist, that reminded me of UNSANE or THE JESUS LIZARD on crack. Recording is impeccable; you can hear everything very well and clearly. Lyrics are printed in the CD booklet, and the album was released by the guitarist of FORWARD, Souichi, on his burgeoning label. (VL)

(Under the Surface, 1-31-9, 2F Numabukuro Nakanoku Tokyo, 165-0025, JAPAN)

ORPHAN CHOIR / UNWELCOME GUESTS – split EP

I'm not sure if the UNWELCOME GUESTS (from Buffalo) would strictly be considered punk, but they're fuckin' great anyway. Melodic and slightly rock-y, their side starts soft and then builds and builds. The singers put emotion in there, and the songwriting and playing is very good. I'm trying to think of comparisons and the first thing that popped into my head was the FOO FIGHTERS, so take that and do with it what you like. You could also throw in THE REPLACEMENTS and UNCLE TUPELO if you like. I'm impressed, and I wouldn't be surprised to hear these guys again; they remind me a lot of the bands that got picked off by the majors in the late '80s. ORPHAN CHOIR (from Ontario) are more, em… I don't want to say emo; maybe emotional melodic punk. Think JAWBREAKER meets SMALL BROWN BIKE. I like it, they have a harmonica. (AD)

($5ppd: Salinas, PO Box 20996, Ferndale, MI 48220)

THE OVER ATTACKS – "Classified as a Lunatic" CD

Spikey-haired punk rock from Finland yet sung in English. Musically, think OXYMORON or a non-horned LA PLEBE. Lyrically, there is a lot of young angst and punk-rock-is-my-savior themes in their songs. A little generic in all, but definitely solid. (JF)

(Heat Wave, www.theoverattacks.com)

PARSLEY FLAKES – "Dead Living/Spitting Blood"

Pretty much some power-pop keyboard punk. More on the melodic side, though. I don't really dig keyboards most of the time, but this totally put me in *Breakfast Club* dance-party-in-the-library mode… You know that dance that Molly Ringwald does that's almost skanking but totally not at all? And maybe a little bit messier than that, with some headbanging or something. I like "Dead Living" better than "Spitting Blood" because it feels more desperate, and I always like things that sound like running away in a junker car through a desert. Driving beats, square waves, those kind of processed-sounding lady vocals that remind me of FUZZBOX, but not as high pitched and bubbly. Both songs have some breakdown near the end that is real chaotic, with everyone sputtering out different lines. Decent times. (MM)

(Hewhocorrupts Inc, www.hewhocorruptsinc.com)

PERMANENT / RESONANCE – split EP

The RESONANCE side of this jammy is much in line with what I generally associate with this area (Richmond/VA Beach) and time. Think a less-refined STRIKE ANYWHERE—pop punk with a much more subtle youth crew hardcore undertone. In fact, it's so subtle that I may just be imagining it completely. It's upbeat and catchy, with plenty of jangle-y guitar harmonies filling in all the gaps. I'd fancy myself a fan (though not a huge one) of this style. I don't really listen to it very often but I can appreciate sappy-sounding melodic songs when they're done right. Does RESONANCE do it right? Well, they were almost there, but the vocal patterns were the same throughout; spit the first half of the line faster, then draw the last half out longer and slower. PERMANENT, on the other side of this 17.78 cm disc, take the current-wave (well, more like a couple years ago) youth crew route. Think Northwest bands—GO IT ALONE, SINKING SHIPS, or CHAMPION. I'm a sucker for this kind of modern hardcore when the hooks and melodies are there and the compositions are a bit slower. (JU)

(Collapse, 1212 Fifth Street, Huntington Beach, CA 01045)

THE PINK NOISE – "Dream Code" LP

This sounds like BLANK DOGS, but without the jolly quirkiness that always makes me smile. On some tracks, it was like digging through a yuppie's basement and finding weird exercise videos with spaced-out synth soundtracks and watching them on one of those TV/VCR combos that don't exist anymore. That's it! It's weirdo '80s electro trash in malls rather than lonely fuzz guitars in dusty garages! Get it? It's like BLANK DOGS' younger sibling who is totally obsessed with SPARKS (the band not the drink). This is the arena of noise that I find interesting, because it's sticking enough to song structure to be accessible, but totally weirding out everything to the point of absurd pop. These bands make me think of desperate teenagers using anything they can to squelch out bizarre-o versions of shitty pop songs they heard on the radio as children (totally interesting) rather than gear-head macho dudes ignoring the audience and twiddling knobs (totally boring). I dig it, but it's kind of epic, like *waaaaaayyyy* to long. (MM)

(Sacred Bones, www.sacredbonesrecords.com)

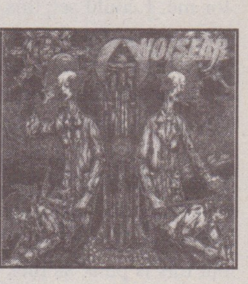
PLEBEUS URBANOS – "Entre Os Muros" CD

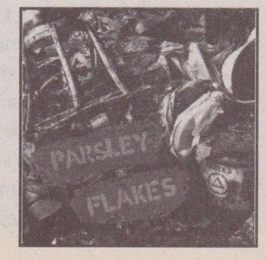
PLEBEUS URBANOS is made up of some São Paulo punks fashioning themselves after ESKORBUTO and early-'80s Brazilian bands like COLERA or OLHO SECO. They've got that classic trashed out street punk sound, with really basic stripped down songs that are fast

Mr Moustache
"staring at the sun"

NANO X
REPETITION
BARA-BARA
Touched by your invisible hand

Night Terror





and angry. (AA)
(Absurd, Caixa Postal 02, Osasco/SP, 06013-071, BRAZIL, www.absurd.com.br)

PLEXI 3 – "We Know Better" EP

There is an amazing thing happening in the Midwest these days—an incredible number of catchy pop punk bands. I'm serious. I first discovered it in Chicago, but it's moved beyond that. These three kids from Milwaukee deliver three tracks that are about as catchy as can be. And, perhaps best of all, they cover RADIATORS FROM SPACE (Ireland, 1977). Well done, boys and girls, well done. (KK)
(HoZac, www.myspace.com/horizontalaction)

POLICE AND THIEVES – "Amor y Guerra" EP

I'm hearing an awful lot of BEYOND in POLICE AND THIEVES' sound—everything about it, from the way the drummer plays, the vocal style, and the way the structure of these tunes are a bit off-balance, have hints of BEYOND-ness. I have a strong feeling that this was not intended and was purely coincidental, but if slightly gritty youth crew-styled hardcore is your thing, this is an interesting listen. (JU)
(Youngblood, PO Box 236, Ephrata, PA 17522, www.youngblood-records.com)

POPPETS – "Get Back" EP

We got four pop songs here from Sweden-based POPPETS. The band is made up of one member from the HEARTATTACKS, a girl with a fucking amazing singing voice, and a drum machine. The first song is real kick-ass. It has the dueling male/female vocals and is pretty punk. Reminds me of this CLEVELAND BOUND DEATH SENTENCE song I really like. The other three songs didn't sound like it at all, though. They were more rock 'n' roll in a REIGNING SOUND kind of way, but not as good. The drum machine didn't really do much for me. I could see this band being really good if they found a skilled drummer that could do some cool fills, and had the lady in this band slam the vocals on her own a bit more. (FS)
(Plastic Idol, www.plasticidolrecords.com)

PRESS GANG – LP

From the name and the cover art, I was expecting herky-jerky post-punk power-pop, but this is punk as fuck. The first track reminded me of THE ANGELIC UPSTARTS and then the following songs reminded me of a more melodic PIST. They get the recipe just right—not too noisy, not too melodic—for this kind of stuff. Lots of bands play the obnoxious card too much and just hide behind attitude, but these cats play some of the best tough, snotty punk I've heard in a while. It's THE REATARDS in studded belts. They sound Australian… but I think they might be German. This kicks ass wherever they're from. Solid chunky, punk-y shit, it makes you want to jump up and down while spitting beer on people. Great! (AD)
(Radio 81, ww.radio81records.com)

PUBLIC SERPENTS – "The Feeding of the Fortune 5000" CD

These guys blend some good anti-imperialist/anti-materialist lyrics with a bunch of different styles, to varying degrees of success. There's a lot of ska-punk and reggae influence throughout, mixed with some straight-up hardcore and punk. The vocals alternate between screamy and snotty (kinda ANTI-FLAG meets FILTH). The tunes that are more straightforward seem to work best for me (the ska-punk of "The Great Big Nothing," the hardcore of "Suburban Dreams," and melodic punk of "The Killing Jar" were my favorites). When the band branches into electronic hip-hop featuring raps with wacky vocal accents, I find them to be at their worst. I don't know, maybe that's what the kids want these days. To sum it up, this disc has a few good patches but a lot of bad ones. With some fine-tuning of their musical style these guys have promise. (RK)
(Tent City, www.tentcityrecords.com)

RAT CITY RIOT – "The Open Road EP" CD

What we got here is one fine example of modern American street punk. You know the recipe—a li'l TEMPLARS, a touch of DROPKICK MURPHYS, maybe a bit of BODIES thrown into the mix, and then just add a dash of '88 revival hardcore. Now throw in some lyrics about drinking and looking for a fight, and you got RAT CITY RIOT. (JF)
(Street Anthem, 93 B Howard St. NE, Atlanta, GA 30317)

THE REAL DEAL – "Hungover, But Dead Sober" CD

From Montreal, the guys do melodic punk a la NO USE FOR A NAME, BLINK, and early PROPAGHANDI. Although these guys apparently do the ska thing too, I'm not hearing too much—it's mostly pretty much speedy and catchy stuff here. (RL)
(Union 2112, www.therealdealhatesyou.com)

THE REANIMATED – "Scream at the Screen" CD

Part decent *Walk Among Us*-era MISFITS worship, part mediocre 1-2-1-2 punk, with a bit of ploddingly boring alterna-rock. No lyrics, but a glance at the tracklist gives me the impression these kids are familiar with the "Horror" section at their local Blockbuster. (CS)
(self-released, www.thereanimated.com)

JAY REATARD – "Singles '06-'07" CD+DVD

Great compilation of JAY REATARD's 7" and 12" EP releases that were scattered throughout a handful of labels in the last year. All of these records have gotten great reviews in this here fish-wrap, and this collection is no exception. If you aren't familiar with JAY REATARD as a solo artist, this stuff is a lot poppier and accessible than his LOST SOUNDS and REATARDS stuff. It's good to have all these tracks in one place, and the DVD is a nice compliment with live performances. A good deal on In The Red. (JF)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, www.intheredrecords.com)

REGURGITATE / SKULLHOG – split EP

Swedes REGURGITATE has been around a long time—since 1991. They start off with the soon-to-be-classic, "Colon Collapse Disorder." Do I need to say much more about a band after giving you that song title? Yup, it's gore-grind, and yep, this is as good as gore-grind gets. REGURGITATE includes former members of NASUM, THY PRIMORDIAL, CREMATORY, CENTINEX, and a few others, and remind me a bit of GENERAL SURGERY. The SKULLHOG (Netherlands) side starts out slow, doom-y, and heavy, which eventually changes to grind/death metal. I like the way they mix up the sounds—the doom-y stuff with the raw death metal with the gore-grind. (MH)
(RSR, c/o Sandro Gessner, Strasse des Friedens 45, 07819 Mittelpoellnitz, GERMANY)

RESONANCE – "Transfuse" LP

Toss TURNING POINT, LATTERMAN, and ONE LAST WISH into a blender, and something akin to this might come out. I'm down with all the parts that don't simultaneously involve breakdowns and hybrid chant singalongs (which are few and far between). The singer's delivery is pretty spot-on and the music is solid. It doesn't sound as much like a reinterpretation of their influences as much as it does regurgitation, but regardless, it's fun to listen to, it's well played, and there's plenty of energy. If you're into TURNING POINT, GORILLA BISCUITS, and Revolution Summer stuff, I don't think you could go too wrong with this one. (P$)
(Collapse, www.myspace.com/collapserecords)

RHYTHM SYNDROM – "Fatal Error" EP

Can't tell you much about this band except that they are doing the early-'80s retro thing, but it really feels like they are trying hard. The recording has the lo-fi production that would normally help such a sound, but something is missing. So much of this stuff has come out in the last few years that when we put RHYTHM SYNDROM up against some of their contemporaries, they fall flat. (MS)
(Shogun, www.shogunrecordings.com)

RIPPING HEADACHE – "Where Did It Go" EP

Fuck yes! RIPPING HEADCHE from Copenhagen, Denmark tears you a new asshole on this current EP! The men administer brutal guitar pain and crush you with a vicious vocal attack. Ferocious bass playing and monster drumming pound you into the ground like a tent stake! RIPPING HEADACHE writes good lyrics. Read some of the words to "Way Too Far": "All that bullshit you put inside your heads / Sometime, somewhere, you knew we had to break… Once again, too blind to see / You helped build your worst enemy / War and terror makes me want to laugh / Hope this generation is going to be the last." Yes sir! That's disheartening shit! This is a great record, punks! Get your copy now! (BR)

(Adult Crash, PO Box 604, 2200 Copenhagen, DENMARK, www.adult-crash.com)

RSO – "Row" LP

During the initial listen, I was annoyed by the first song. "Shit, another one of *these* bands." Maybe I should stick to old favorites in the morning before I drink my coffee. And maybe I should have only been assigned this one record for the month so I could try to fully understand it. Post initial-listen of side one led me to believe this record lay somewhere between side two of *My War* and NEU!'s *2*. Second listen of the first side complimented my original thoughts with "this record would fit in well alongside the early Gravity Records releases." I was a fan of Gravity when the label and I were younger, partly because it released fucked-up (not the band) records that sounded weird and different. That's hardly an adequate description of the current platter, but like a long drive, the first step is pulling out of the driveway. Side two is similar to the first: slow and plodding, heavy and repetitive, riffs that just get pounded into your head, much weirder or different than anything I've listened to in a long time. I wonder how RSO writes songs. "Okay, part one, that riff…we'll play it 32 times, then…OK, we'll just play the next song." I believe there are a plethora of indie rock bands (DEAD MEADOW unfortunately comes to mind) that play similar slow and heavy music, but while that shit comes off as pretentious and vapid, this comes off as genuinely desperate and grabs you by the throat. Most of these songs are really slow and heavy and drawn-out, but the first one is something of a rocker. They incorporate…a theremin? What is that? Something that makes their already fucked-up sound that much more fucked up. The recording is a little muddy but it's a nice mud. This is not background music, and it's not music for lovers or friends. This record occupies and dominates your attention. Cool cover art to complete the package—a CD with two bonus tracks included with the first 500 copies of the LP. (VL)

(RSO, 118 Gordon Street, Clifton, NJ 07011, www.rienissomethingoriginal.com)

RUDIMENTARY PENI – "No More Pain" CD

I've always harbored mixed feelings towards the post-*Cacophony* RUDIMENTARY PENI records, which is a testament to the original '80s material's sheer, towering, monumental greatness rather than a weakness (*Pope Adrian* aside) on the part the band, each time they surface every four or five years. Four records and twenty-plus years later, it's evident that we're unlikely to see a return to the horror-edged, thoughtful, political lyrics. Like *Echoes of Anguish*, *Archaic*, or *Underclass*, the lyrics here are bleak, dark snippets of meditation on mortality and death, which work well in tandem with Nick Blinko's always-creepy, always-great artwork. Unlike those records, however, which largely mimicked *Death Church* in tone, tempo and recording, the ten-song recording here is much fuller, modernized, and open, and the delivery is faster, punchier, and guitar-driven, turning the page and making for the band's best record since *Cacophony*. The trademark bass-lines still hover below the surface, the scowling, odd vocals still howl, and while the music is largely straightforward, there's still the completely odd, head-scratching track, as per their version of "Pachelbel's Canon." Coming soon to crusty weddings everywhere! Ace! (KS)

(Southern, www.southern.net)

RUNNAMUCKS – "Untouchable/White Faces"

Just like ANNIHILATION TIME, the 'MUCKS started as a hardcore band and went on to this scummy, seedy rock 'n' roll shit. Solos abound. But unlike ANNIHILATION TIME getting better with *ATII*, the RUNNAMUCKS should stick to the older shit. I was actually kind of grooving on the first song, just because, but then I flipped it over and turned nauseous. Don't knock the Rok, man, it's a slaughtering of "White Faces." Ugh… (RR)

(Gnarly Slaughter, 1200 Coit Street, Denton, TX 76201, www.myspace.com/gnarlyslaughterrecords)

RUNNING FOR COVER – "Dark Well" LP

I guess I missed the boat on RUNNING FOR COVER, as they've been defunct for a while now. This Buffalo, NY band most definitely blazed some serious ass and rarely let up their inventive powerviolence-styled hardcore attack. Near-constant machinegun-fire bursting over some really creative riffs that take a talented craftsman to come up with. Hell, all the players here were of the highest order and created something special. If you like your hardcore played at breakneck speed, absolutely do yourself a gigantic favor and give this LP a spin. A great record. (JU)

(625, www.625thrash.com)

SAINT ALVIA CARTEL – CD

Canada's SAINT ALVIA CARTEL plays melodic, dare I say it, Warped Tour-styled punk rock. You know, heavy on the production and not really grating or anything. Still, SAINT ALVIA CARTEL does this stuff well, and sounds sort of like a mix between SIXER and country-mates BEDOUIN SOUNDCLASH. For those *MRR* readers who don't go near anything with a Fat, Epitaph, or Union Records label on it, I am saying that the vocals are a little gruffer and that it has some dubby moments. (JF)

(Stomp, www.stomprecords.com)

SASS DRAGONS – CD

Pop punk? Goofball punk? Just fun punk? Whatever it is that SASS DRAGONS play, I sure do enjoy it. Sounding like a cross between LOVE SONGS and THE FLESHIES, SASS DRAGONS seem like they are having a great deal of fun in making a truly enjoyable record. I don't know what is in the water down in Carbondale, but when you combine this release with THE COPYRIGHTS and DEAR

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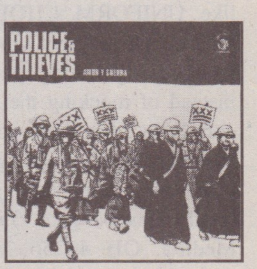
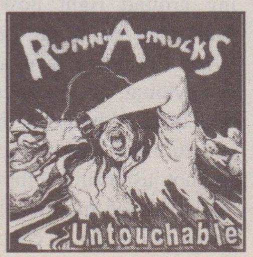
PLEXI 3
PLEXI 3



RIPPING HEADACHE



LANDLORD, I wanna drink. (JF)
(Johanns Face, www.johannsface.com)

SATANIC THREAT – "In to Hell" EP

Ha ha ha! This is fucking amazing! The music was absolutely not what I was expecting when I first threw it on since I was pre-judging it by the (extremely awesome) fold-out cover full of skulls and upside-down crosses. I was also thrown by the way these dudes look with their long hair and burly demeanors (all three are in NUNSLAUGHTER fer *crisssakes*!), but this is 100% all-American fucking old-school hardcore with an over-the-top hatred of all things Christian! Yes! One of the tracks is almost a complete note-by-note cover of "Small Man, Big Mouth" by MINOR THREAT, except this time it is "Small God, Big Cross"! OK, I get it now…SATANIC THREAT! There's also "Guilty of Hating Christ." And this goes on, with six more tracks that pull from '80s greats like UNIFORM CHOICE and old 7 SECONDS. These guys kind of pull off the joke straight edge thing but sing about religion instead of mocking the silliness of most posicore lyrics. Are these guys totally just fucking around or is this project going to be a real band? Either way, you need to get this! (BG)
(Hells Headbangers, 3593 Medina Rd #109, Medina, OH 44256, www.hellsheadbangers.com)

THE SCENICS – "How Does It Feel To Be Loved: The Scenics Play The Velvet Underground" CD

Not really sure what to make of this. The question *why?!* immediately pops to mind. *Is this a joke?!* comes second. Cassette recordings of THE SCENICS playing VELVET UNDERGROUND songs at various shows and rehearsals in Toronto from 1977-1981. I guess it's nice these guys were covering all these songs back then and they do a nice job at it. The music sounds very similar to the original, but the vocals sound more like TOM VERLAINE than LOU REED. The recordings are a bit muffled and fuzzy. Overall, it's enjoyable I guess, but I wonder why they didn't release some of their original material, too. (CK)
(Dream Tower, www.scratchrecords.com)

SGT. SLAUGHTER – "They Call Me Guitar Dickmouth" EP

There are a few bands with this name floating around right now, but this one from Massachusetts is the one you need to know about. I'm not too sure about the title of the EP or anything, but the music is fucking amazing '80s-inspired hardcore that contains the type of structure that makes each song an actual *song* and not just a simple thrash assault—something that a lot of traditional, straight-up hardcore bands fail to do. A couple of tracks here have great instrumental lead-ins before the songs explode full-force. The lyrics fall along that fine line between amazing and moronic, if you dig what I mean (a little towards the latter, but fuck it). I'd stack this up there with some of the better contemporary bands like SOCIAL CIRCKLE and maybe GOVERNMENT WARNING. OK, I might be pushing it a bit. Still, this is punk as fuck and totally worth finding a copy. (BG)
(Social Napalm, PO Box 4073, S. Chelmsford, OH 01824-0773, www.socialnapalm.com)

SHIT EAGLE – "Girls in School" EP

I typed their name into a search engine to attempt to get their record label address, and the first thing that came up was information about a show they were playing with FAG COP. Just to contextualize them as one of those bands with names invented by dudes trying to channel their inner shit-eating child. It's funhouse music played by vengeful miscreants on PCP, specialists in that shitty sound that's taken over the garage crowd like a cult. (LG)
(Florida's Dying, www.floridasdying.com)

SHOREBIRDS / SOMETHING'S WRONG – split 45

Crust-pop is alive and well, and has actually become a full-blow subculture of its own in Washington state. This a world of dread-mulleted, roadkill-eating badasses with coffee stain colored SCREECHING WEASEL t-shirts and DYSTOPIA patches, and where everyone knows every word to every JAWBREAKER song. It really has to be seen to be believed. In lieu of experiencing the real thing, you can drink a fuck-load of Pabst (well, Ranier if you can find it), pack yourself and some friends into your water heater closet to simulate a Georgetown basement, and crank up this split single. The SHOREBIRDS song is a plodding but melodic tune—like a slower version of their über-catchy hit, "People I Live With," from their first EP. SOMETHING'S WRONG is from Asheville, NC, but fits right in with the Northwestern aesthetic. Their song features male and female vocals, and is more upbeat and catchy than their split-mates'. It doesn't grab you much at first, but then the gravelly female vocals transform into GITS-y soulfulness for a glorious chorus. Totally rad—can't wait to see them out here in August! (PC)
(Rumbletowne, PO Box 663, Olympia, WA 98507)

SHORTCUTS – CD

This all-girl group from Minneapolis dishes out the pop punk. More punk than pop, this reminds me of THE EYELINERS and a rowdy early GO-GO'S. Light on harmonies and heavy on barre chords and shouting choruses, this is a fun release. This may also include the rebuttal to THE WEASELS' "Beat Her With a Rake" with the great "They Say I Hit Him With a Chain." (RL)
(self-released, theshortcutsband@gmail.com)

SINALOA – "Oceans of Islands" CD

I know Mr. Floyd only assigned this to me cause of the Massachusetts thing. Anyway… this is *eeemooo*. I haven't heard music like this in years. In fact, the last time I *was* listening to music like this, I still liked it. It's all pretty guitar parts, falsetto vocals, and a really well rehearsed jazz-styled drummer. Think bands like FOUR HUNDRED YEARS, that one SHOTMAKER spin-off (I think they were called THREE PENNY OPERA), etc. Rather unfortunately, I'm starting to like it by the third song. Sigh. (JU)
(Level Plane, www.level-plane.com)

SISTA SEKUNDEN – "Sista Forsvarslinjen" CD

Not quite what I was expecting when I saw this described somewhere as Swedish hardcore, because this is clean and polished and harmonious—not the throat-grabbing enchantment that you would expect when you hear the words "hardcore" and "Sweden" in the same sentence. To be fair, there are some moments of power and speed here, but most of the album just sounds too much like the overproduced, melodic hardcore punk that might appeal more to the Warped Tour or Fat Wreck crowd. Apparently there are members of INTENSITY and SKITKIDS in this group, but I don't hear anything along those lines. And don't be fooled by other reviews floating around on the web comparing this to CITIZEN'S ARREST or CAREER SUICIDE (like I've seen) because that's bullshit. This sounds closer to stuff like STRIKE ANYWHERE or RISE AGAINST, which is not saying it's bad, but just a whole different ballpark. (BG)
(Instigate, www.instigaterecords.com)

SKIN LIKE IRON – "Amalgamation II" CD

Fuck, where did these dudes come from?? Turns out they are right here in my backyard—well, not literally of course. Ex and current members of bands I never heard of. A thick, heavy, noisy sort sounding like a pig (or boar) that is writhing in shit, blood, rotting meat, and chips of bone. This is the digital format of previous cassette-only releases all in one easy package. They also have a 10" (reviewed by someone else in this issue) that you should check out. Enjoy the disease—I did. (JH)
(self-released, www.blacksummer.com/sli)

SKIN LIKE IRON – 10"

I love SKIN LIKE IRON, but there is something to this new-ish Bay Area power house's that I just can't seem to put my finger on.

They have a looseness to them that, at times, causes certain songs to fall apart but I also think it keeps this band from falling into any identifiable trash heap (read: genre). It reminds me of some non-existent band that would have been playing ABC No Rio every weekend during the early '90s. Think something like CITIZENS ARREST if they were playing now and had more in common with Gravity Records, and you're halfway there. Kind of like post-everything hardcore—the kind of band that could only exist in 2008. It's got a good amount of melody and anger, really simple yet interesting riffs, and plenty of originality. The B-side is entirely taken up by two moody, long, slower instrumental jams that don't in any way take away from the record. I really like this band but like I said, it's hard to convey that or explain why. I guess that's a good sign of something special. I'll give it two thumbs up. (JU)
(self-released, www.blacksummer.com/sli)

SOTATILA – "Eepee" EP

This is the first non-comp-track release by this band that boasts members from both Austria and Finland. SOTATILA had some of the standouts on the *Propaganda Is Hippies* compilation LP, and the songs on this EP are every bit as intense. The music has a distinct mid-'80s Finnish hardcore sound that takes its cues from the classics, most notably MELLAKA. Sung in the Finnish tongue, the urgent vocals push this over the top with the right amount of distortion and tactfully placed echo. This one pummels. (SE)
(Kämäset Levyt, Vallikatu 28 A 2, 33240 Tampere, FINLAND, www.punkinfinland.net/kamanen)

STATUES – "Broken Hands" EP

Beautiful Canada has kindly decided to share one of its best-kept secrets with all us yankee-doodles south of its cold and vast borders. Three tunes of super catchy, super tight power-pop-influenced punk. Some early XTC, hints of THE ATTRACTIONS, a little sprinkle of BUZZCOCKS, a touch of THE JAM and a nice dose of THE CROWD—making this one of the best EP's of the year. If you're a lover of hooks, well-crafted vocals (THE FUTUREHEADS, anyone?), and the type of punk rock that puts a massive, stupid, glorious grin right across your ugly face, then do yourself a favor and get this. (SD)
(Plastic Idol, www.plasticidolrecords.com)

STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER – "Is a Fucked Up Mess!" EP

I've always had a soft spot for STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER—they mix a handful of different hardcore sounds, making them hard to pigeonhole and keeping it exciting. Screamed female vocals that you can almost understand to go along with a nice mix of fastcore, powerviolence, and borderline grind—almost all done sloppy and fast. The band is from Fresno, CA but their main influences seem to be Japanese fastcore bands. (MH)
(Wicked Witch, www.myspace.com/xstraightedgekeggerx)

STEADY STATE – CD

Like THE TIM VERSION or GUNMOLL with some AGAINST ME! *As The Eternal Cowboy* influence (clean/bright guitars and an acoustic song with electric reverby leads). The artwork looks great. The first song and the last song are good. If you're into THE TIM VERSION or LEATHERFACE-inspired bands from Florida, STEADY STATE probably won't disappoint. This band is a little ahead of the curve, as far as the glut of this style of punk is concerned. Lyrically, it sounds like sometimes they're trying a little too hard and referring to a protagonist as the "weary wayward wanderer" makes me feel a little awkward. There are two good songs on here, and on the other five I feel like this band is capable of more. (P$)
(self-released, 1526 37th Street North, St. Petersberg, FL 33713, steadystatefarts@gmail.com)

STRAIGHTJACKET NATION – "Cheap Kicks" LP

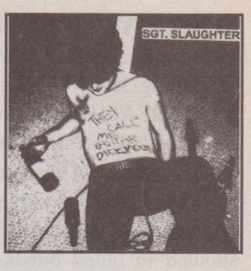
After two EPs and split single with fellow Australian punkers EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING, STRAIGHTJACKET NATION has tackled the 12" format like a horny Kiwi in a sheep field. Often compared to Clevo "rippers" like 9 SHOCKS TERROR and H-100's, STRAIGHTJACKET NATION mixes it up a bit from the non-stop thrash of the singles and throw in some mid-tempo numbers like "Cheap Kicks," "Choke," and the even-slower "Get in the Boot," that just make you wanna slam. What really keeps me into it are the sick build-ups, hooks, and snare rolls that are all over this thing. If you were lucky enough to see them on their US tour or in Australia and you dug it live, then you won't be let down by this 12". Solid as a rock. (SE)
(Shortfuse, PO Box 239, North Carlton, Vic 3054, AUSTRALIA)

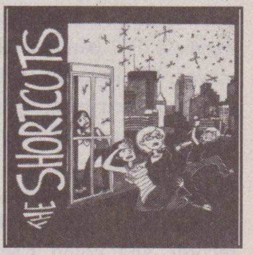
STUPID PARTY – "Technology Apology" EP

So I may be a dick, but this looks awful, has terrible packaging, and appears to be part of a scene I don't really jive on (looks like some dirty *Cometbus*/HICKEY-obsessed schlop). But as soon as needle hits platter, I'm floored—I can't think of what it sounds like, and I know the jokes on me. Unpretentious, killer garage-pop; fuzzed, drinking-alone-in-my-room punk. I want to drink beer, smash glass, and spray paint the walls. Fuck, this is killer; one song reminds me of SCRATCH ACID, which is so off, but *agghh*, I'm really frustrated and this rules. "1234" is going on my next mix tape. This could be on Goner or Shattered or any other stupid label, but it's way too real and punk for anything. Top ten of the year they be headed. There is so much surface noise I love *ittttttttttttt*… (RR)
(Starcleaner, 1020 Bushwick Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11221, www.starcleaner.com)

SWITCHBLADE CHEETAH – "The Bone Gospel" CD

29 fucking tracks—are you kidding? Who has the time, I ask? It's the era of 50-hour work weeks, two jobs to pay the rent, two-hour commutes from suburbia to work, and the fucking European football finals. Don't cheat my time. Anyways, a sound ranging from New York mosh to '82-inspired punk-core, and all the way to what I can only explain as Oi! boys playing screamo. I really don't wanna listen to this anymore and if I could win back any of my wasted time, I'd use it to kill Floyd for assigning me this. (SD)
(Goat-Fi, www.switchbladecheetah.com)





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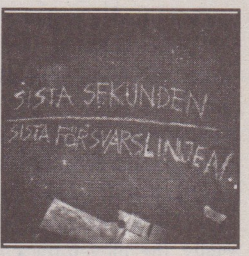

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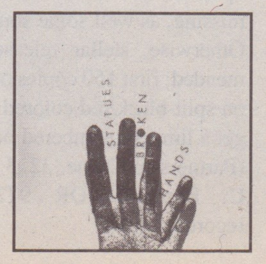


SYSTEMATIC DEATH – "Systemania Volume 1" 2xLP

Hailing from Yokohama, Japan, SYSTEMATIC DEATH was one of the earliest of Japanese HC bands that would define the sound of that wonderful place respected and loved by so many. The band played lightning-fast thrash, with catchy, angular riffs, and a singer who shouted in quick bursts of lyrics, stopping in between words and phrases for momentary, short breaths. What separated SYSTEMATIC DEATH from many of the other early and legendary Japanese HC bands is the pace at which they played. While many of their peers played much slower on their early releases, later increasing the pace and finesse of their songs, SYSTEMATIC DEATH, finesse or not, only ever played one speed—very fast—and it is easy to trace their lineage, from their early demos to the later records and comp tracks, with this release. Featured on this double-LP are eleven tracks from a never-before-released demo recorded in '83; the *Systema* EP, their first record, as well as outtakes from that same session; the tracks from the *Hold Up Omnibus* compilation, which also featured the legendary GHOUL, CLAY, and GASTUNK; and the *Systema 2* cassette, another never-released demo recording. The gatefold cover and LP sleeves feature old photos of them playing and hanging out, scans of the releases, lyrics printed in English and Japanese, flyers for old shows, including one featuring GAUZE, COMES, and CHAOS UK, with contact information listed as a phone number for the *GAUZE office*, and a family tree, which further demonstrates the impact of this band. (Members went onto BASTARD, DEATH SIDE, JUDGEMENT, FORWARD, and other heavyweights.) The sheer volume—music/information—of this release is amazing and almost overwhelming, but what surprised me the most were the two demos, especially the eleven-track demo from 1983. The recording is really clear, and, compared to contemporaries, say GAUZE's *Fuckheads* LP, this thing is a monster. Fast songs, shouted vocals, and the guitarist playing loads of scrambled leads, sounding like a combination of Greg Ginn on 45 and GAI's guitar parts, minus the distortion. The second demo is a much rougher listen; less clear, lots of tape hiss, but cool to hear different versions of songs that appeared on their later releases. My only complaint is the lack of track listing. When trying to find the overlap between the demos and the records I had to rely upon the lyrics, which I'm pretty sure some are missing, as well some song-titles were changed. Otherwise, stellar release and highly recommended; first 150 copies of this and *Volume 2* are on split-black/red colored vinyl. Order both and get a limited, numbered poster. (VL)

(Partners in Crime, 3213 NE MLK Blvd, Suite C, Portland, OR 97212, www.brickwallrecords.com)

SYSTEMATIC DEATH – "Systemania Volume 2" 2xLP

Systemania Volume 2 compiles the majority of SYSTEMATIC DEATH's better-known vinyl-released material, with a slew of comp tracks (some of which have previously only seen light on tape), and also includes the gig-only *Gratis* EP. The song "May Peace Previl on Earth" is a previously unreleased outtake. This double-LP set is the companion piece to the first volume reviewed above. If you doubt buying this because of the price tag, stop deliberating right now. Both of these collections are elaborately packaged in a gatefold sleeve, with tons of flyers, lyrics, and pics of the band looking punk-as-fuck—I can stare at photos like these all day. Many of the tracks have never graced vinyl, plus *every single fucking song is a ripper*. Aside from the rabid guitar riffage, the vocalist Shigeru sounds as if he frequents asylums, and the drumming has that manic hammering, snare-roll-littered style, which takes any hardcore band to the next level. SYSTEMATIC DEATH stands up to just about any old international hardcore band in terms of the quality of their material. It's high-energy, powerful, maddened hardcore in the classic Japanese form. These reissues are done right and worth every bit of your hard-earned, dirty money. (CI)

(Partners in Crime, 3213 NE MLK Blvd, Suite C, Portland, OR 97212, www.brickwallrecords.com)

THEY LIVE – "No Escape" CD

Not to be confused with the cinematic masterpiece featuring "Rowdy" Roddy Piper battling the upper class race of aliens that took over earth via subliminal media, THEY LIVE is a metallic punk band out of Minnesota. The music is AFI-esque with lyrics that read, not surprisingly, like horror movie dialogue. It would be cooler, I know, if John Carpenter had written a concept album to accompany the movie, featuring the vocal stylings of Roddy Piper and Keith David. It could happen. (AA)

(They Live, PO Box 23515, Richfield, MN 55423, www.myspace.com/theylivewesleep)

THINK BRIGADE – "Laugh It Off" CD

Wow, ripping Japanese thrash/fastcore. Damn, this is high-energy hardcore thrash. Some gang vocals, a few breakdowns, lots of speed, and a slight straightedge feel, but only in sound not message. They remind me a bit of CONGA FURY (but with a male vocalist) or SENSELESS APOCALYPSE. The former singer of Bay Area doom-grinders ELEPHANTMAN is the bass player in this band and some of the other members used to be in WE MUST BURN. The energy level and all-go attitude is infectious. This rocks. Check it out. (MH)

(Thrash Again Sound Works, Lespoir Tsurumai #107, Tsurumai 4-4-2, Syouwa-ku, Nagoya City, Aichi Pref, 466-0064, JAPAN)

THOUSANDSWILLDIE – "A Carcass Is Only Dead Once" EP

I think you will instantly know what THOUSANDSWILLDIE is all about by the title of the record alone and the insane fact that there are 25 songs (!!!) on this 7". This relatively new Bay Area grind powerhouse takes off on the first note and don't let off the gas one bit 'til the needle hits the run-out at the end of side two, save for a few two-second samples. This is grind-most-foul and if you discriminating grind freaks out there don't already have this, I suggest you hop into that Model-T you got parked outside and head on down to General Shultz's Records and pick yourself up a copy, 'cause these shits'll be gone faster than granny can re-load that double barrel. (JU)

(RSR, c/o Sandro Gessner, Strasse des Friedens 45, 07819 Mittelpoellnitz, GERMANY)

TITANARUM – "Spastis Progressivus Aggressiorum" EP

San Diego's TITANARUM's first offering. And I have to say, it holds a soft spot in the ol' ticker. Total blue-collar hardcore. Quick, violent beatings of everyday life from the Average Joe—heartfelt, honest lyrics that hit home in a big way. You'd think these fuckers were from the Midwest or something. Music for the over-30-year-old punks who still don't give a fuck. "Your Death" is the standout for me, with lines like this... "Gun violence keeps me employed / My paychecks are lives that are destroyed / I keep a blindfold around my heart / When I pick up your head that's been blown apart"—how can you not love that? My favorite EP of the month. Now you guys better trail yer ass up to SF and play some shows. (JH)

(Titanarum, 4118 Florida St., San Diego, CA, 92104, www.titanarum.net)

TRASHCAT – "Too Much Ain't Enough" CD

I can't even bring myself to make fun of this shit. Imagine that the kids from *Saved by the Bell* decided to form a MOTÖRHEAD cover band! Now you don't have to imagine anything. Here it is. I guess maybe this is TURBONEGRO's fault too, but bad rock-a-rolla bullshit is so punishing and insufferable. This music can be done well—like, for example, SKITKIDS, who add their own distinctive element to the sound, making it clear there are possibilities still to be had in the doctrine laid down by Lemmy, et al. When I have to listen to shit like this, it makes me realize why I go to punk shows and not shitty bar rock ones. (LG)

(Dirtbird, www.myspace.com/trashcatrocknroll)

TURPENTINE BROTHERS – LP

Second album? How'd I miss the first one? I guess I've got to stop sleeping under bridges or something. Loose garage-y energy and attitude with a bunch of noise, some dissonance, an occasional neo-new wave touches from the organ to offset the heavy chording elsewhere, and a variety of influences tossed together to keep things interesting. Solid, Jackson. (DD)

(Alien Snatch, Danziger Strasse 1, 10435 Berlin, GERMANY, www.aliensnatch.com)

TV GHOST – LP

This is a refreshing record for fans of strange sounds. It's not the weirdest thing in the world, but it's pretty damn strange. It blends noise, rock, and pop hooks into something that makes it stand out as being weird as a whole, even though it's nothing groundbreaking. It's just got that right mix of rock and noise where you can get into the rhythm of the song yet it's far from anything linear. The liner notes and album art offer absolutely zero information about the band, which pleases me. I like a little mystery from a band making music like this. Any information they could have provided probably isn't worth knowing anyway. (MU)

(Die Stasi, 532 Defiance Ave, Findlay, OH 45840)

UK SUBS – "Warhead" CD

By the sounds of things, *the* Charlie Harper's got a pretty dynamite lineup for the SUBS right now—the three new tracks on this five-song CD are blistering. Still, with only three new songs and two re-workings of old classics (the title track and "I Live in a Car" from the first LP), I can't help thinking this was rushed out to capitalize on the use of "Warhead" on the soundtrack of last year's skinhead film *This Is England*. I actually resented the way a punk song (by a decidedly anti-Nazi band) was used to mark the film's turn to the dark side as the protagonists drive out to a National Front rally in the countryside, after the first half of the film was dominated by reggae and ska. I never understood why a band would re-record classic material, but all five tracks here sound good, at least. I'd rather have waited a few months to hear a full album of new tracks like the three on here. (AM)

(Jet 31, 14 Temple House, Ward Rd, London N19 5EE, UNITED KINGDOM, www.jet13records.co.uk)

UNIT SIX – "In the End" CD

This Florida trio plays fast-paced melodic street-punk similar to RANCID, ANGEL CITY OUTCASTS, and THE NEW BREED. Really active bass-lines running up and down the neck and lots of quick guitar leads interspersed throughout. My faves on this eight-song disc were "Right Here With Me" and the closer "In the End," with its REAL MCKENZIES-ish guitar melody. (RK)

(This Is Not Dead, www.unitsixmusic.com)

USED KIDS – "Hoovercraft" EP

When I started listening to this record, the first thing I thought was, "Oh man, these guys are totally trying to be THE MODERN MACHINES." Then I took a closer look at their picture on the front cover and realized that they actually have several members from THE MODERN MACHINES. After talking to my roommate (who adamantly hates THE MODERN MACHINES), I found out that, after that band's members all gradually moved from Milwaukee to Brooklyn, they decided to reform, but changed their name. It's not entirely made up of the old band, but close to it. So, to cut to the chase, this record is exactly what you'd expect out of an average MODERN MACHINES 7". Very pop, heavily influenced by THE REPLACEMENTS, or BENT OUTTA SHAPE for a contemporary comparison. The lyrics from the song on side A totally read like a BEACH BOYS song. Three songs in all; they're all OK, but nothing mind-blowing. (FS)

(Salinas, c/o Marc Reosti, PO Box 02802, Detroit, MI 48202, www.unshadowed.com/salinas)

VACATION – "Magnet" EP

Sloppy punk that's kind of triumphant and *waaaaay* serious. There's girl/boy vocals and they both sound like bad actors, like they're trying to make this mega-emotional, earth-shattering music but seem like they're reading from a teleprompter. VACATION also reminds me of the DIY shows in Olympia that always had a band that everyone would sit cross-legged and sing along. This isn't that band, but a band that always plays those shows. It's kind of preachy and condescending. I keep thinking of SHIPPING NEWS or even NEUTRAL MILK HOTEL. You know that sad-triumphant sound? Kind emo, but in the early/mid-'90s way? With super serious sounding bad poet lyrics? But this is more shambolic punk. Or something. (MM)

(Helloasshole, 1104 Imperial Rd, Cary, NC 27511, www.helloassholes.com)

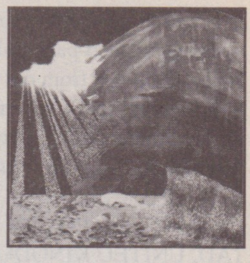
VERSE – "Aggression" CD

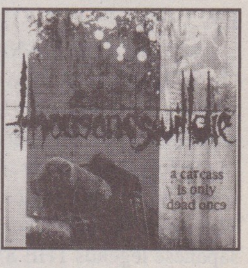
VERSE is a band out of Providence, RI that plays heavy, melodic hardcore with a political consciousness, similar to bands like BURN and INSIDE OUT. If you've heard of this band, than you're probably aware of their cult-like following or their two LPs and demo 7". Here, with their third LP, they are still doing the same thing, but progressing at the same time—something that most bands lack after writing and recording records for six years. "Aggression" brings out the energy of their live show and the emotion behind singer Sean Murphy's lyrics. A masterpiece of the amazing-core genre. (PL)

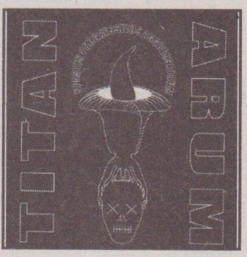
(Bridge Nine, 119 Foster St, Building 4, Suite 3, Peabody, MA 01960, www.bridge9.com)

VIOLENT UPRISING – "4 Track EP" 12"

Another obscure early-'80s UK punk recording has been unearthed and given the deluxe reissue treatment courtesy of Demo Tapes Records. This month's installment, the fourth so far, features VIOLENT UPRISING, a teenaged quartet from Preston, Lancashire in the Northwest of England. Their four-song demo was recorded in September of 1982 and sounds like what you might imagine a band of school kids heavily influenced by DISCHARGE and THE VARUKERS would sound like. The sound quality is pretty rough, and not necessarily in a blown-out way—more like they only had one mic for the drums and it was at the other end of the room. The bass, along with the vocals, is most prominent in the mix, and there is some cool guitar shred over the top of it all, kicking in with some atonal solos at all the right moments. The







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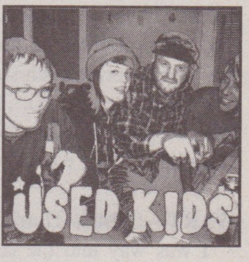


real cool thing about this release is the huge and amazing sixteen-page full-color booklet, with lyrics, clippings from old zines, a ton of photos, and various other ephemera—not to mention the awesome poster. If only all reissues were assembled with this much care and effort… (CS)
(Demo Tapes, PO Box 357, London, SE19 1AD, UNITED KINGDOM)

THE WANKYS – "The Very Best of Hero" LP

Here are some WANKYS lyrics for you all: "In the morning and at twilight, totally obsessed with *PUNK* everyday / In the morning and late at night, totally obsessed with noise everyday." In the following verses, the subject matter finds some range, with topics such as beer and sex. This Brit band is some sort of tribute to Japanese legends THE SWANKYS, done pretty well with loads of noisy riffs and really odd childish lyrics. I really like most of the records that La Vida Es Un Mus puts out, but I kind of miss the point of a whole LP from a band basically worshipping another band. No, they are not covers, and they add their own twist. I don't know, it just didn't really do it for me in the end. I'm sure fans will pick this up because they get the nature of the band. (WK)
(La Vida Es Un Mus, www.lavidaesunmus.com)

WAR OF DESTRUCTION – "Normalisering" EP

WAR OF DESTRUCTION, considered Denmark's first hardcore band by many, existed throughout the '80s and has been back together and playing shows for several years now. This four-song EP was recorded in 2006 and is half new material and half old (never-recorded?) stuff from the late '80s. I can't tell the difference, so it would seem these folks have been able to pick up pretty much right where they left off—rough 'n' raw HC delivered with harsh vocals (lyrics in Danish) and buzzsaw guitar. The bass provides an underlying catchiness as the foundation to each song. Not bad for a buncha old codgers! (CS)
(Hjernespind, PO Box 505, 2200 Copenhagen N, DENMARK, www.hjernespind.com)

WART – "Shuso-Danji" EP

I was way into the last WART CD in all its good-time pogo-rific sing-along-y glory. This new disc is very much in line with that previous release. In fact, it might be even more pogo-inducing. This is just good ol' classic and punchy punk rock with a goofy edge that probably has the crowd having a great time at every show. Think the energy and back-up-vocal-stylings of SYSTEMATIC DEATH with the bouncy edge of bands like ASTA KASK and SLIME. Fun music; I'm on board. (JU)
(Hardcore Kitchen, hardcore.exblog.jp)

WELFARE MOTHERS – "Long Brown Hair/Bloodsucker"

When this record started and the singer came in, I though they were English, but apparently they're from Texas. This sounds good, like a beefed-up, sped-up WRECKLESS ERIC or something. It rocks in all the right directions and the two songs are short and sweet—no unnecessary wanking. I'm not sure if it would sound as good as a full-length, but I have an incredibly short attention span when it comes to garage-y or rockin' stuff, and this is great. I know a lot of folks around here are going to cream themselves over this. (AD)
(self-released, 6919 Misty Leaf Lane, Sugarland, TX 77479)

WILD WEEKEND – "Cosmetic Couple/Black and White"

WILD WEEKEND is a female ZEROS cover band that formed to play a few shows for fun in 2007. That's the idea of the cover band—play some live shows, get drunk, and have a good time. The audience usually loves it, especially when it is a girls-covering-the-boys thing. It is when the band starts releasing records that I wonder about their intentions. WILD WEEKEND is a very good cover band and I like the choice of songs on this record, but I don't know if a recording (or two) is necessary. Speaking as a former all-female cover band member, you've got to give it up before the novelty gets annoying. (CK)
(Munster, www.munster-records.com)

WILD WEEKEND – "Don't Push Me Around/Wimp"

Four young ladies covering the ZEROS, how can you go wrong? It's a trick question, fucker, you can't go wrong. As with any good cover, they stamp the songs with their own sound. These are a little slower and softer than the originals, but retain their catchiness. Oh, and guess who recorded the songs? Hector Penalosa. That's right. Very cool, indeed. (KK)
(Munster, www.munster-records.com)

WOODEN TIT – "Strange Notes/Sex Beat"

Wow, what a waste of natural resources! This single by WOODEN TIT consists of their relatively xeroxed interpretations of GUN CLUB's "Sex Beat" and THE GERMS' "Strange Notes." I'm kind of appalled that in this day and age of depleted oil that anyone would consider this release a good idea. I'm all for friends getting together and making a racket, be it originals or covers, but not everything needs to be documented on vinyl. The upside is that they only pressed 350 of these so it won't clog all that many dollar-bins and landfills. (CI)
(Hate, Via S. Giovanni In Laterano 192/194, 00184 Roma, ITALY, www.haterecords.com)

WSF – "Rollercoaster Girl"

Well played mid-tempo hardcore that just misses the mark for me. Don't get me wrong, it's not bad. In fact, it's actually pretty good. I'm just at a stage where I need things to be better than good to get my attention. With songs like "Your Daddy's an Asshole," they're headed in the right direction. (KK)
(Hapamon, PO Box 423977, San Francisco, CA 94142)

V/A – "Bippp" LP

Born Bad has been pumping out the '70s and '80s French synth classics lately. This album, along with the *IVG* and *Des Jeunes gens Modernes* comps that have come around of late are a nice dirty window into the rich history of cold-wave/synth-wave music that has continued to dominate the land of cafés since the late '70s. This installment features the likes of A TROIS DANS LES WC, ACT, LES VISITEURS DU SOIR, VOX DEI, COMIX (my favorite track on the record), TGV, CKC, MARY MÖÖR, DEUX, RUTH (also great), VITOR HUBLOT, VISIBLE, and CASINO MUSIC. For those looking for an easy reference, think a more "underground" version of something like GARY NEWMAN/TUBEWAY ARMY or KRAFTWORK. I'm normally not into anything this synth-heavy, but the French do it right. (JU)
(Born Bad, 38 Avenue de Stalingrad, 93170 Bagnolet, FRANCE)

V/A – "Deny the Report 5" CD

I haven't heard the other volumes of *Deny the Report*, but this edition rips. ENCROACHED and UNARM play fast, blistering hardcore that is sure to piss off your neighbors. GROANING GROOVE rocks out with some noisy punk, which makes your grandma learn to dance. The kids roll on the floor in honor of THE SCRIBBLER's Gravity Records influenced punk. The party mix is brought to a new level with ISTERISMO's blasted out Italian hardcore style, and IMPARA tears the house down with their noisy-as-fuck wild hardcore sounds. CODE indulges us with some weird-ass punk hit reminding your uncle of his era of punk. EASIES pleasantly irritates the brain with their scream-y vocals and pedal-effects-fucked hardcore. Stage diving and floor punching gets some encouragement from youth crew sounding GORDON IVY & THE JAYBIRDS. Then, RINTO SS sadly ends the disc with an off-kilter, agitated punk tune complete with crazed vocals and cool moments of wild, scraping guitar. Every song on this disc is good and a lot of genres are included. *Deny the Report 5* definitely reinforces the fact that Japan has no shortage of great bands. (CI)
(Too Circle, 221-3 Hi-home kodaira 510, Nakamachi Kodaira-city #187-0042 Tokyo, JAPAN, toocir@xd5@so-net.jp)

V/A – "Funhouse Comp Thing 2" CD

I hate comps. I hate a lot of things, but I probably hate comps more than I hate Hitler. Forgive my little burst of pent-up emo rage, 'cause this is actually one of the better comps to worm its way into the review section of *Maximum Cocknballs*. A double-CD, 50 tracks in total (I'm gonna be here all night, I'll never have time to kill Floyd…), zeroing in on the Pacific Northwest scene and the infamous Seattle punk venue Funhouse—put together with care and a quality control that compilations usually skip on, and thankfully sticking to an unreleased-only policy. Taking in some of the heavy hitters such as INTELLIGENCE, SPITS, COCONUT COOLOUTS, A-FRAMES, while giving a heads-up to the lesser-knowns such as THE HACKS, STUCK UPS, and a host of others. Full of surprises, great tunes, and the joy of discovering great new bands, this just might be a keeper. (SD)

(Myfatass, 206 5th Ave. N, Seattle, WA 98109, www.thefunhouseseattle.com)

V/A – "Urla Dal Granducato (Volume 1)" LP

This is the first of two collections documenting some of the lesser-known "Granducato Hardcore" bands that existed in the 1980s in the Tuscany region of Italy. Taken from old demos or live tapes, the sound and performance quality here is what most people would consider "poor." WARDOGS comes off as perhaps a minor-league CHEETAH CHROME MOTHERFUCKERS, spouting Darby-esque vocals over sloppy, manic HC. SENZA STERZO's seven tracks come from a 1988 recording, so while the production is relatively good, the energy level and overall intensity is much diminished compared to the wildness of the earlier Italian bands. The majority of AUFSCHLAG's tracks were recorded live at the legendary "Last White Christmas" show in 1983. This shit pushes the boundaries of what can be considered "music"—sonic vomit punctured by crazy ranting, the songs (to use the term loosely) held together seemingly by sheer velocity and momentum. Definitely my pick of the bunch. The single track by the last band, HOLOCAUST, sounds like it was recorded in a snowstorm and then dubbed a couple dozen times on cheap cassettes before finally landing on this comp. The overall layout is god-awful, but does include a decent bit of content on the bands as well as a short and humorously translated overview of the GDHC scene of the '80s. It's a noble project, though honestly not one that is likely to get many spins on my turntable. (CS)

(Area Pirata, www.areapirata.com)

V/A – "Urla Dal Granducato (Volume 2)" LP

Yet another release of old Italian fury pulled off of ancient tapes and placed on vinyl for our listening displeasure. We have four bands—FALLOUT, STATO DI POLIZIA, JUGGERNAUT, and BRONTOSAURI. I am a freak for Italian hardcore and there are some real stand-out tracks here. STATO DI POLIZIA is one of those obscure but cool bands that delivers some amazing stuff. Overall, the majority of the music on *Urla Dal Gran Ducato Volume 2* comes off some old live tapes and comp cassettes. I personally do not have too much patience for live recordings, but this is definitely a must record for fans of noisy punk. (MS)

(Area Pirata, www.areapirata.com)

V/A – "Viva Kopi" LP

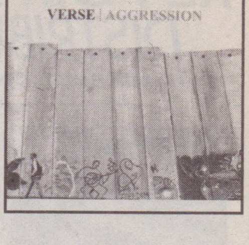
First I want to start off by saying that Kopi Squat in Berlin is one of my favorite places to play or see a show in all of Europe, and the thought that it someday may not be there crushes my faith in humanity that much further down what seems to be a bottomless pit. It appears though, for now, that Kopi will be saved for sometime due to the overwhelming support, struggle, and solidarity of the underground movement all over Europe. It really goes to show that people can change the fucked system around them if they will get off their asses and stand together. I'd like to see more actions taking place in the US in support of what little DIY establishments we have and also fighting for new ones. This compilation looks awesome, with a great multi-color silk-screened cover and printed booklet with lyrics, photos, fliers, and most importantly, information on the meaning of the benefit to Kopi. The whole thing must have taken tons of effort on the part of the collective. There are sixteen bands in all on the comp, mostly from Europe with a couple internationals thrown in the mix. Seriously, the Kopi squat is legendary and of course some of the best bands in Europe and elsewhere threw down exclusive tracks for this effort. The standouts—though I have to admit this may be one of the best compilations overall I've heard in the last five years—are BOMBENALARM, ASSASSINATORS, BEHIND ENEMY LINES, AUKTION, NUCLEAR DEATH TERROR, and CAVE CANEM. This record is a great introduction to current bands in Europe playing at the moment. The mastering of the record is pretty good without lots of jumps in volume, and the music seems to flow. Other bands are the NOW DENIAL, IMPERIAL LEATHER, ALLE DER KOSMONAUTEN, HORROR, RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA, SIGNAL LOST, FAMILY MAN, CROSS STICHED EYES, and NOVEMBER 13TH. Great job! (WK)

(self-released, www.kopi137.net)

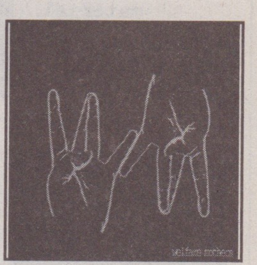
V/A – "We Do What We Want" EP

This is an amazing EP! *We Do What We Want* features five songs from five different Olympia bands: BLACKBEAR, SON SKULL, HOOKY, COMIN UP ROSES, and SHOREBIRDS, and every song stands alone as a rad song. I've now listened to this record five times over, and I have to say this is probably the second best 7" comp I've ever heard. I'm not shitting you, it's that good! The true gems come from SHOREBIRDS and HOOKY, but like I said, they're all amazing. The HOOKY song blows my mind. I've been listening to their demo a lot lately, so I was really stoked when I found this record in my box. Their songs have the feel of early THIS IS MY FIST. But aside from the music kicking major ass, a big part of what endears this record to me is that it's super obvious a lot of love went into making it—like a bunch of Olympia punks got together to make this happen. It's got rad screen-printed covers made out of recycled LP covers, and a nice big booklet filled with all kinds of awesome pictures and writing and junk. Rumbletowne Records, man! I have a feeling this is only the first of many great records coming from these kids. (FS)

(Rumbletowne, PO Box 663, Olympia, WA 98507, www.rumbletowne.com)



WAR OF DESTRUCTION
NORMALISERING
EP



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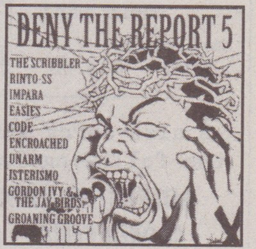

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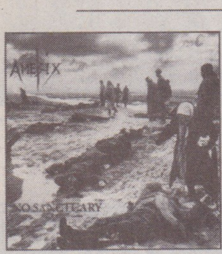

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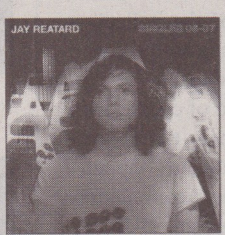

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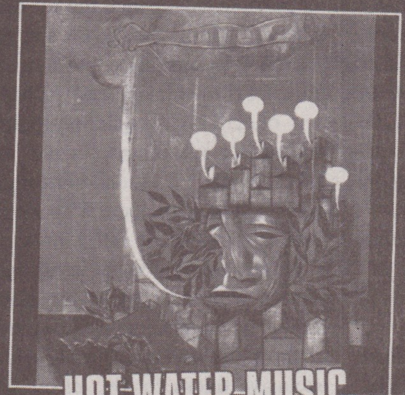

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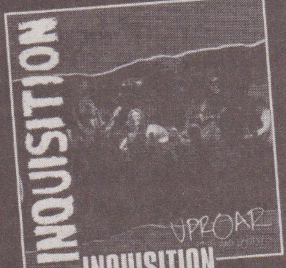

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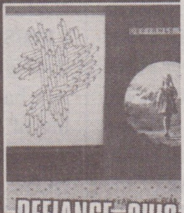

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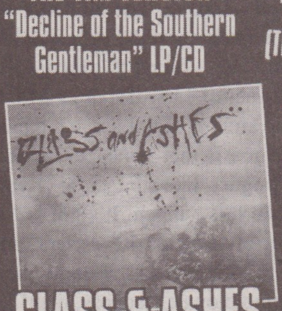

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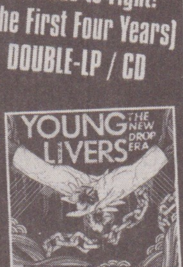

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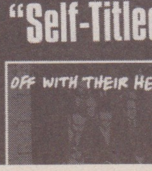

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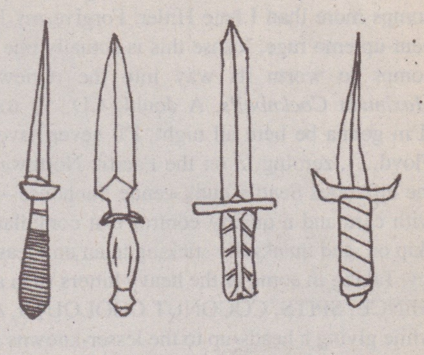

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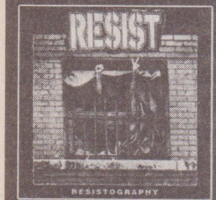

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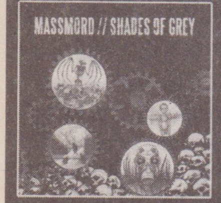

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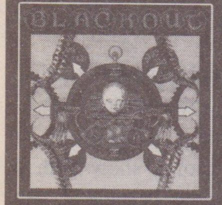

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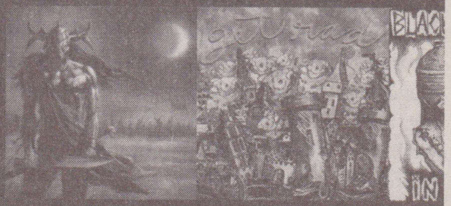

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DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Peter Avery, Justin Briggs, Nick Mangel, and Cissie Scurlock

ABSOLUTE MAGNITUDE – This is simple, short, fast punk rock with feeling. Think part THE PIST and early Dischord. ABSOLUTE MAGNITUDE mostly sticks to fast drumming, power chords, a slightly distorted bass, and yelled vocals but throw in the mandatory breakdowns. It's not groundbreaking, but it has tons of energy and is done pretty well. (Pete) (8-song CD, no lyrics included. 561 Milford Ave, Columbus, OH 43202, absolute_magnitude_music@yahoo.com)

ANAL WARHEAD – Hardcore, plain and simple. I wouldn't be surprised to see one of the highly-touted labels in Virginia put out ANAL WARHEAD's 7" 'cos this is upper-tier for the style. The raw, desperate vocals keep this from sounding stale, and the guitar has some welcome moments in the wild. Hardcore rules! (Cissie) (9-song tape, some lyrics included, $2ppd, 7 Maybrook Dr, Glenville, NY 12302)

ARNOLD STRONG – This is pretty straightforward early-'80s throwback hardcore with an added GORILLA BISCUTS influence. The songs are fast and short, filled with power chords, yelled vocals, and gang backups. There is a certain poppy element that keeps it from feeling like tough guy hardcore though. The sound quality isn't really a plus here. (Pete) (9-song tape, lyrics included. f.y.i.t.h.records@gmx.net)

CHLORINE – These Albany chaps aren't afraid to expose their '90s melancholic melodic side. This could be called emo, but it's of the non-arty, pop variety. CHLORINE is reminiscent of JAWBREAKER, only with flatter vocals. The songs are endlessly hooky and the recording is high quality for a demo. CHLORINE's off to a good start. (Cissie) (4-song tape, lyrics included. Max Wolfe, 111 N Pine Ave, Albany, NY 12203, hunk2518@yahoo.com)

CRITICAL CONVICTIONS – This Ottawa, ON band really freshens things up by using their heads instead of opting for the dumb and offensive-for-no-reason school of hardcore. Lyrically the ground CRITICAL CONVICTIONS covers follows the well-tread path of punk/politics subject matter and anthemic slogans, but I feel that this band really lives/means what they say. Also included is a short list of books and websites to check out. As for the music, these Canucks play straightforward thrash with occasional well-placed and competently played guitar solos, and once in a while tone it down to a mid-paced raging. All in all, this is a pretty cool demo. I'm on board and am eager to see what comes next. (Justin) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, $5 ppd. 1675 Hunters Run Drive, Ottawa ON, K1C 6Z6 Canada, punkazaa@gmail.com)

EXIT HIPPIES – EXIT HIPPIES was a staple of the noise-not-music school of Japanese hardcore up until a few years ago. Often cited as "raver crust" due to their forays into the occasional electronic moment, EXIT HIPPIES had a lot in common with GAI, DISORDER, CONFUSE, and the crasher-crust thing. At times it's hard to tell what instruments you're actually hearing—is that a blender? A circular saw on metal? An overloaded electrical socket? At times the music even just disappears out of nowhere. Anyway, this tape is a discography of EXIT HIPPIES' output. (Justin) (25-song cassette, no lyrics included. Black Konflik, PO Box 28, 27600 Raub, Pahang, Malaysia, blackseeds@yahoo.co.uk)

GENERAL INTEREST – Mutant rock, Neo-bopism—these terms never really caught on, but maybe they apply to GENERAL INTEREST. The rhythm section remains repetitive and sharp, the guitar wanders and rarely plays chords, and the vocals are spoken creating their own pattern over the music. The individuality of the instruments makes for an eclectic and interesting sound, which might be defined as angular by a lazy person. Definitely a neat demo from these Boston punx. (Cissie) (5-song tape, no lyrics included, $3ppd. 59 Myrtle St, Somerville, MA 02145, generalinterestpunk@gmail.com)

HUMANS OFF PLANET EARTH – This is dark, but fast, grinding hardcore that relies heavily on the noise element. Crunchy guitars and tons of feedback sit on top of a pulsing bass and solid, up-tempo drumming. The yelled vocals have a ridiculous amount of reverb on them that sort of fits with the whole ambient noise thing but it goes a bit too far. (Pete) (6-song tape, lyrics included. humansoffplanetearth@hotmail.com)

JAMES BROWN'S HIDE SHOW – This is crazy French grindcore that has no time for slow parts, unless of course it includes some odd sample like the *Friends* theme song or part of a BEE GEES tune. The songs are a pure blastbeat attack with heavy power chords and high pitched screaming. There is something wonderful about listening to fifteen songs in less than fifteen minutes. (Pete) (15-song CD, lyrics included. Boite 63, 31 Square Andre Malraux, 95130 Franconville, France, jbhs.propagande.org/ifeelgood)

LIKE RATS – LIKE RATS plays basic but solid hardcore in the vein of POISON IDEA with a bit of a NYHC feel. The songs are mid to up tempo with bursts of speed mixing with slower trudging parts. The guitars play basic power chords and the vocalist has a gruff yelling style. The tape transfer wasn't great but it is certainly listenable. (Pete) (7-song tape, lyrics included. 246 Brookline St #1, Cambridge, MA 02139, likeratsboston@gmail.com)

THE MAD SPLATTER – The last thing I expected from a band called THE MAD SPLATTER with a cover featuring a knife-wielding Wayne Newton covered in blood and sporting lyrics like, "With a chainsaw in his hands and your gut stains on the floor…" would be playing SCREECHING WEASEL-style pop punk. I guess it makes perfect sense but I expected gore-grind. The lyrics are somewhat gory but absolutely goofy. Pop punk ain't my thing but these guys do it right—the Chicago way. Lots of back-up melodies and catchy guitar lines. Cool. I have "zombie, zombie, who got the girl and they wandered around the world," runnin' through my head. (Justin) (3-song CD, lyrics included. www.myspace.com/themadsplatter)

OBLIVION DK / SHOTGUN FIASCO – This is a split demo that has SHOTGUN FIASCO taking the first eight songs. It sounds like it was recorded in the back of a show with a boombox which is a shame because I can almost hear some good, catchy, up-tempo hardcore but I'm not totally certain. The last four songs by OBLIVION DK are spacey hardcore tunes played buy one guy with a drum machine, a heavily distorted bass and a crunchy guitar. Well, those are betters as the majority of it is noise stuff without much of a direction. (Pete) (12-song CD, giant booklet included. 1818

Evergreen Pk Dr SW #18B, Olympia, WA 98502, exemptdrange@yahoo.com)

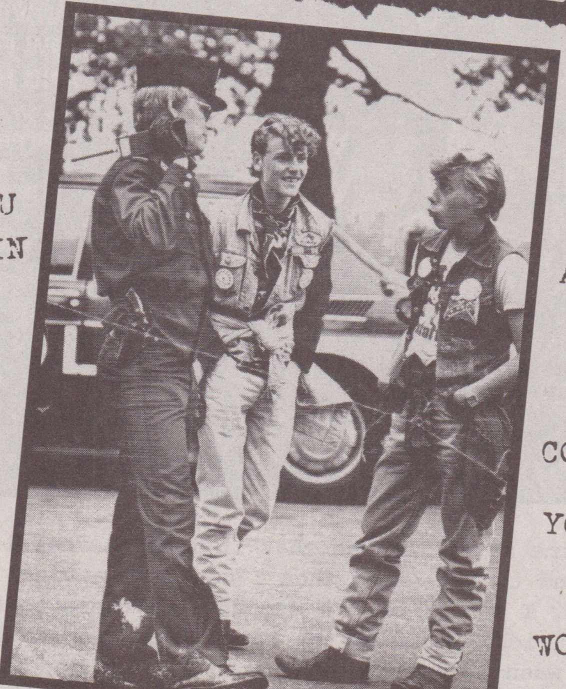
ORDER – This release compiles two recent ORDER EPs (*Saru* and *Toyota*) onto one handy cassette named *Kombinat*. Someone told me that ORDER is incredibly popular in Japan and gets played on the radio. If that's true, it blows my mind because they are one of the strangest sounding bands on the H:G Fact roster, and I mean that as a compliment. Sure, their music is melodic, but it's also loud, chaotic, off-time, and overblown with effects and other general madness. Plus, they seem to get weirder sounding with every release, and the songs on this tape aren't exactly easy on ears. At any rate, ORDER is totally great and even though these tunes are available elsewhere, it's probably worth tracking down *Kombinat* if you are a fan 'cos it looks so damn cool. (Cissie) (H:G Fact, 105 Nakano Shinbashi M, 2-7-15, Yayoi-Cho, Nakano, Tokyo, 164-0013, Japan, hgfact@japan.interq.or.jp)

RELIGIOUS AS FUCK – This month it's perfectly obvious that I really gotta show my preconceived notions the door when I'm sitting down to review. Well, they really shouldn't exist at all, but come on, I'm a human, we're fucking idiotic creatures of habit. This cassette collects RELIGIOUS AS FUCK's 7", their tracks from a split 7" with MEHKAGO NT, and a full live set. This shit is really killin' it right now! Mostly fast, tight-as-hell discordant hardcore that occasionally blasts and is fresh and totally ruling! The breakdowns are sick too. At times I'm reminded of BORN AGAINST, not so much in sound, per se, but just in the way the songs are put together. I'm super impressed. Mailorder this beast and get a free button (I'm putting mine on right now). (Justin) ($5 ppd, 13-song (plus a whole side of live songs) cassette, lyrics included. Drugged Conscience Records, 5140 Tamarind Ridge Dr, Naples, FL 34119, www.druggedconscience.com)

SCOLD / VENGANZA split – Pretty awesome international DIY split CD here by two bands playing '80s full-on SXE youth crew hardcore! VENGANZA is from Guatemala and are a little heavier, and thicker in sound with more gruff vocals while SCOLD is from Malaysia and plays high pitched lo-fi HC with a more youthful sound. Awesome project, lyrics, and packaging!! (Nick) (?-song CD, lyrics included. Kawaii, Carville David, 38 Rue Docteur Dubois, 58110 Chatillon en Bazois, France www.kawaiirecords.com)

WHITE LOAD – On the A-side there are six messy hardcore tunes. It attacks you from the start with fast, noisy music that is topped off with manic screaming. Unfortunately it's a bit sloppy, and the recording probably doesn't do the songs justice. The B-side has eight live songs that sound like a mess of noise. (Pete) (14-song tape, no lyrics included. Bloodstain, 16 1/2 Suffolk St, Cambridge, MA 02139)

V/A – "Esta Sucia Ciudad" – I've heard some claims that Barcelona currently has the best punk scene in the world. I don't even know how to qualify that statement, but from the outset of SUKO DE NABO's burly hardcore tune "Poder Genocida," *Esta Sucia Ciudad* makes quite an argument in favor of such words. If you've been paying any attention to the releases by INVASIÓN, OTAN, SIBERIÄ, etc (all of who appear on this tape), then you know Barcelona has some interesting and ripping, raw hardcore, but in addition to all the ragers on the tape we are treated to the mid-tempo punk of ESCROTO DE RATA and the semi-electronic weirdness of EL ATAQUE DE LA BASURA RADIOACTIVA. Other highlights include NO CAOS, ATENTADO, CRIMEN D ESTADO, ah fuck it... at no time during this tape do I want to press fast-forward. It's all good. This shit is unpolished, impassioned, and anything but generic, which are essential ingredients for punk and hardcore magic. (Cissie) (17-track tape, lyrics included. c/o Cintes Podrides, Apdo 24042-08080, Barcelona, Spain)



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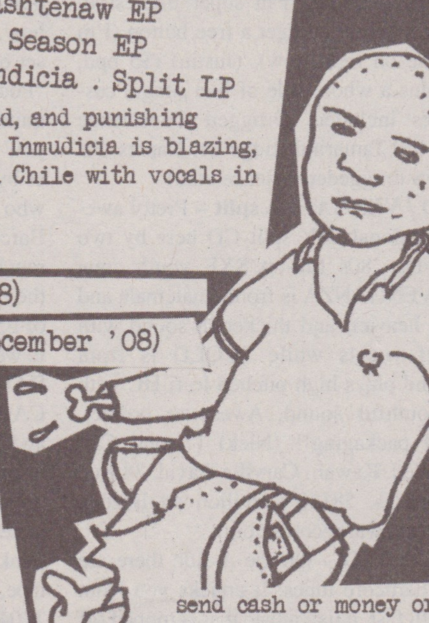

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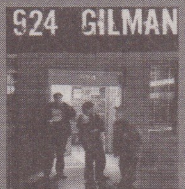


"The best thing I took from my time at Gilman was that it made me feel like I could go out and do anything I wanted if I set my mind to it. Also, that I could be a vital part of the music community, even if I wasn't in a band. I was given the opportunity there to interact with all different types of people, young, old, rich, poor, white, black, men, women. I experienced quite a bit of personal growth at Gilman. It wasn't just "something to do" for me, it was a passion, and to be able to be involved with something you're passionate about feels amazing. ... Sometimes I think about all the people out there... being inspired by the idea of Gilman (like I was). Maybe they live too far away and can never go there and experience the reality, but the idea of the place, the existence of the place, the potential of the place, could lead them in the same direction, even if it's just in their heads." -- Jessica S. '02 (excerpt from 924 Gilman book)

ZINES

Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

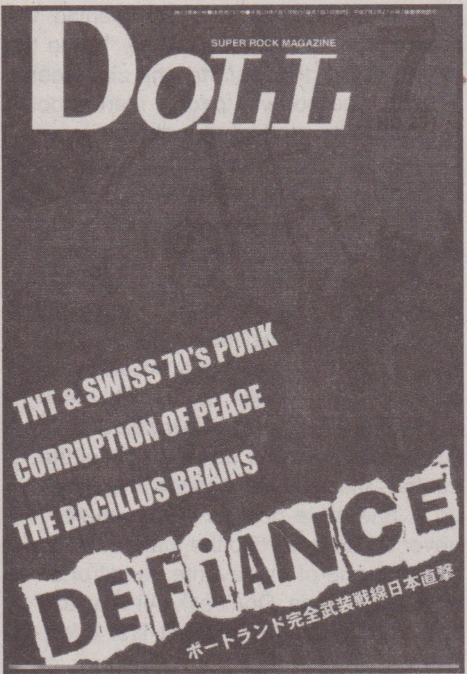
Reviews by:
(JD) Judy Balmin
(JB) Julia Booze
(JU) Justin Briggs
(BG) Bob Goldie
(CH) Cassie Harwood
(MJ) Meredith Jones
(NM) Nick Mangel
(JM) Jeff Mason
(SM) Scott Miller
(CR) Casey Ress
(CI) Cissie Scurlock
(DS) Dionne Stevens

ALWAYS NEVER FUN #4 / $3 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 38ages
This is a totally DIY zine from New Zealand filled with band interviews (Tentacles of Destruction, Vae Victis, StreetKunt), stories/writings and reviews. The layout is cut and paste, some text is typed and other parts are handwritten. There is nothing that really stands out about this zine, except for maybe the quirky interview in which the interviewer and the interviewee are the same person. Even though this isn't really a zine I have any need to keep at arms reach, I really like the fact that punks are still putting together printed media such as this. (SM)
Sam / 70 Owen St / Newtown / Wellington / New Zealand

BELOW NOON #2 / $2 or trade
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 48 pgs
Angie P. divulges tales of childhood self-discovery (the literal, physical kind), coming-of-age lesbianism, and other honest accounts of pre-adolescence. (CH)
PO Box 42123 / Portland, OR 97242
belownoon@gmail.com

BELOW NOON #3 / $2 or trade
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 48 pgs
Below Noon #3 features a fresh batch of scandalous childhood and young-adult confessions. This time around we find the author peeing in the wastebasket of her grade school classroom—a defiant act that she suspects may have sparked the subsequent actions that play out in her life from that point on, and find themselves in the latter pages of this zine. Angie P. analogizes and sentimentalizes at a pleasant pace. The only thing I could do without is the descriptive drunken sex scene, but even that just goes along with this zine's bare-all mentality. (CH)
PO Box 42123 / Portland, OR 97242
belownoon@gmail.com

BIG HANDS #6 / $2 or stamps
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
This is a personal zine, all writing with just a tiny bit of graphics. There are two stories, one about his family and one about getting dumped, focusing on the ominous lead-up. The overall aesthetic did remind me of Al Burian's work—the layout, North Carolina and coffee, failed relationships. Cory's writing isn't as strong as Al's, but you can say that about most zine writers. If I bought this for two bucks, I'd be a little disappointed afterwards. I would want to check out future issues, though. Also available is another zine, similarly sized and identically priced, reprinting a few of Joan Didion's essays from her book *The White Album*. I would recommend going to the library to check out her work before or instead of sending two bucks here. (JM)
Aaron / 1104 Imperial Rd. / Cary, NC 27511



CONSTANT STRUGGLE #3 / $2
8.5 x 11 – copied – 20 pgs
Constant Struggle is a full-size but rather short endeavor chock full of band interviews and of course, record and show reviews covering the Southern California DIY hardcore scene. This thing is like a blast from the past with its handmade cut-and-paste aesthetic and simple approach to the interviews and layout. I love it! The groups featured in this issue are Strung Up, Social Sickness, SBV, Bad Reaction, Killin' It, Total Abuse (all hail this almighty band), and Neighborhood Watch. There's also an interview with Ryan from Flat Black records, the label responsible for a slew of skate-thrash killers in the last few years like Tipper's Gore, C.O.P., Crucial Cause, etc. I also love the funny little comic in here about the Cro-Mags. My only objection is that the entire issue can be read pretty much in one quick sitting. Maybe some articles or editorials would fill up the space better than the enormous ads that sometimes take up an entire page. That being said, all of the great photos and the amount of cool music covered here definitely make this worth checking out. (BG)
Constant Struggle / PO Box 1690 / San Juan Capistrano, CA 92673
constantstruggle88@yahoo.com

DOLL #251 / $?
10 x 7 – printed – 118 pgs – Japanese
Doll is well compiled and impressive looking with pictures and interviews. All content is in Japanese, although some of the subheads are in English. This issue covers bands Defiance, the Bacillus Brains, Disarray, The Star Club, and a long section on Swiss punk bands that looked really sweet. *Doll* seems to be a good resource for mail order just from glancing at their extensive ads. Just wish I knew more Japanese.
(MJ)
NO. 303 AOTA BLDG. / 3-1-9, Kita, Kohenji, / Suginami-Ku, Tokyo, / Japan.
hensyu@doll-mag.co.jp

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DON'T HAVE A COW #5 / $4
8.5 x 11 – copied – 50 pgs

This is a vegan recipe zine that contains a lot of political information about veganism as well as news about what's going on with the farm animals at the Cockadoodlemoo sanctuary in Reno, Nevada. The confusing thing about this zine is that it seems to preach to the converted: it addresses issues of interest to vegans such as where to buy vegan shoes and the effectiveness of vitamin supplements, but then includes a lot of rambling about animal cruelty. It seems redundant to mention these facts to vegans, because of all people, they would know well about the mistreatment of animals. This zine really turned me off because it was *so* negative—it rambled on about how poorly animals are treated but made little-to-no mention of the benefits of veganism as a healthy lifestyle. There was also a big section about the different animals that live on the farm that the people who put together this zine take care of, which was really boring. I mean, I like animals, but whether Festus the goat is neutered or not is really irrelevant to me. What really bothered me about this zine was a list of arguments to use in order to convert people to become vegan. The way it was presented was really manipulative—I think choosing to be vegan should be a personal choice, not something you force on people or try to trick them into doing. Although the actual recipes in the zine look really tasty and easy to make, this read was a total bummer. (MJ)

Mark Robinson / PO Box 8145 / Reno, NV 89507
www.cockadoodlemoo.org

EQUALIZING DISTORT vol. 8, #3 / no price listed
8.5 x 11 – copied – 20 pgs

This is the paper supplement to the Toronto radio show of the same name. It features longer interviews with mainly local bands, reviews, and a tiny bit of other stuff. This time the locals are About To Snap and Burning Love; Cleveland's Homostupids also appear. The music reviews feature mostly smaller labels and bands. The interviews are more comprehensive than thrilling, but are great if you are interested in the bands. I think this would be mandatory if you live in the area or follow the interviewees. I speculate that a Canadian dollar could get you a copy domestically; I don't know what use they have for the devalued American dollar anymore. (JM)

21 Foundry Avenue, Unit 5 / Toronto, ON / M6H 4K7 / Canada
equalizingxdistort@ciut.fm

FIRESTARTER #1 / $3 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 36 pgs

Here we have the inaugural issue of the fanzine put out by the man behind the record label of the same name. To me the *raison d'être* of *Firestarter* the zine seems to be to find out why people started doing what they do, and what makes them continue to do it, author included (whether he realizes it or not). Inspiration. The interviews in this issue are with Bane, Ruiner, Sick Fix, and Sleepwall, and there are a couple questions relating to what I previously stated that are used in every interview. I like the consistency 'cause it allows for the ability to marinate on all these points of view at once. My favorite piece in the zine was the interview with Bane's Aaron Bedard as he was a staple of the central Massachusetts scene that I grew up in and while he was always there, I never spoke a word to the man. Plus, he sang for one of my favorite bands of all time, Back Bone. Don't ask. All in all this is a solid zine, and a great first effort. Bravo. (JU)

Mike Riley / 2981 Falls Road / Baltimore, MD 21211
firestarterrecords@gmail.com

FIXATION STREET #11 / $1
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 52 pages

First time I've seen this excellent zine. Much of *Fixation Street* is travel related, which usually isn't my cup of tea, but most of the stories were about Alaska which I am fascinated by, so that works. The music portion of the magazine is top notch with coverage of lost Euro punk bands, an interview with the Finnish mag *Toinen Vaitoheto,* book reviews, some Montreal and Thailand travel stuff, etc. Very very well done. (NM)

Mike Schake / 63 Highland Road / Hackettstown, NJ 07840

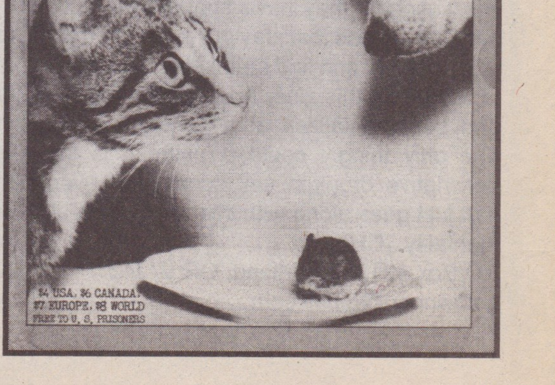
FRANTIC CITY #3 / $?
5.5 x 8 – copied – 36 pgs

Frantic City contains zilch aside from band interviews, no reviews, no nothin'. The man behind it, Cherry Boy, used to include an editorial but now claims that they are "useless and boring." The music focus of *Frantic City* is garage, power pop, and classic punk. The interviews are fairly basic, email-style, but there is such an abundance of them that after reading this I feel like an expert on the scene that Cherry Boy is promoting. Interviewed this time around are Teenage Head, the Automatics, the Users, Mighty Joe Vincent, Radio Reelers, Kidnappers, Live Fast Die, the Carbonas, Funhouse Strippers, and the Heartbeeps. If this realm of music is your steez then you probably want to check out *Frantic City*. (CI)

31 Rue A. Barine / 17000 La Rochelle / France
(Retroactive, www.retroactiverecords.com)

GREEN ANARCHY #25 / $4, free to US prisoners
8.5 x 11.5 – printed – 92 pgs

The title is pretty direct—no mincing words with this crowd. As you flip through the magazine you encounter a great many articles, many of which are thoroughly sourced with heavy hitters like Nietzsche, Weber,

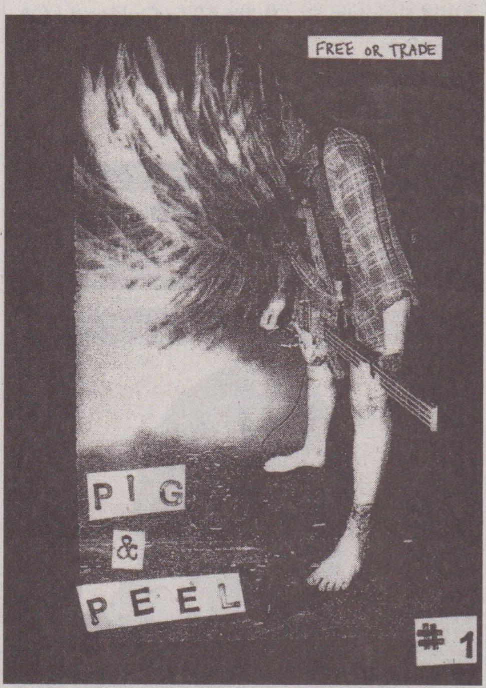


Heidegger, and Foucault. They are distrustful of technology, devising of strategies to get off the grid and convince others to do so also, informative about the world anarchist situation, and much more. On the opening pages you'll find "Connecting to Place…" by Sal Insieme, which is an elegantly written and totally insightful essay that reflects on the relative benefits and detriments of constantly travelling versus getting rooted in one bioregion. Felonious Skunk's piece about being a dad in this fucked up world is also very well done and engaging. The section called "Further Symptoms of the System's Meltdown" is hilarious. It's a bunch of news shorts all about infrastructure being destroyed and workers misbehaving. There is, however, a pattern that bugs me, which is that some of these writers tend to use heavy handed, super dramatic, all encompassing statements and prose to make their points. One article sneaks in a shot at the development of the synthesizer as contributing somehow to the demise of the orchestra and lumps that in with the sadness of real life going down the drain with the growing trend of virtual reality computer/video games. I think that's stupid and simple and drains legitimacy from their actual arguments. I love Devo. And Arvo Pärt. And Raum—all at the same time. I also love drawing in my notebook and playing with Photoshop—simultaneously. How can both of those mediums flourish while the authors have constructed these bold, unrelenting, mutually exclusive dichotomies? Many of these tragic, the-world-has-already-ended toned writings strike me as needlessly dramatic and dismissive of multitudes of great radical people and ideas. But, if you haven't noticed, I'm not an anti-civilization anarchist and they are the intended audience of this magazine. (JD)

PO Box 11331 / Eugene, OR 97440
collective@greenanarchy.org

JAGGED VISIONS #1/?
8.5 x 11.75 – copied – 34 pages
There seems to be a lot of passion behind the writer of this zine. So much so that it comes across a little awkward at times. The piece on Restless Youth is informative and interesting, but it was edited in such a way that I was forgetting what was going on as I was reading it. The interview with Rob from 108, on the other hand, was great—not pretentious in presentation or half-assed in the questioning. It was the Whitehouse and Fucked Up interviews that struck me the most. The Fucked Up Q&A was conducted with their manager, David Eliade (huh? what?) I'm not really on the Fucked Up hype-train, I think they are a fairly good hardcore band and all, but this was just weird. I don't know who this guy is and by reading I didn't really ever get that explained. This is where the awkwardness was really in full. "*Jagged Visions* had the honour to have the first interview ever with the mystical mastermind behind the band." I don't understand why this is an honor or why it's considered a Fucked Up interview. Whitehouse on the other hand was just uncomfortable (in an appealing way). The interview part was more the interviewer asking questions and Bennett disagreeing with what he was saying, an odd read for sure, but then again, it's Whitehouse, an equally odd band. Second Combat from Malaysia's interview was definitely solid and worth reading. Don't get me wrong, I thought this was a really good zine and I respect what is going on here, it just wasn't easy to digest. (SM)

Jaggedvisionszine@gmail.com



LETTERS #2 / Donation for postage, free for prisoners
4.5 x 7 – copied – 58 pgs
I got the feeling I was picking up an intense read when I laid my eyes on this pocket-sized, but thick and text heavy journal-style publication. The editor calls it "an anti-political communist journal," but assures on its website that it's not affiliated with any particular political party. The first essay takes a look at the concept of DIY from a Marxist perspective. Another piece responds directly with criticisms to excerpts from a book of "anti-literature" rantings called *Bukaka Spat Here*. I had to do a bit of Googlin' to get to the point where I knew what was going on with that one. I really appreciated the totally obscene S&M drawing with the words "Chomsky and Me" scrawled above it. That made me chortle. There's also a lengthy section with letters between two people called "Dialogue: Against Labour," which seems to be a response to a piece called "Manifesto Against Labour" by Gruppe Krisis. At moments it's a bit much with the purple prose, loads of fifty-dollar, secret-language-theory words, and the melodramatic tone, but that can be fun. This is your hot summer, big thinkin' anti-civilization read. (JD)

c/o Liberation Projects / 838 East High Street #115 / Lexington, KY 40502
editor@lettersjournal.org
www.lettersjournal.org

LIFE DURING WARTIME #9 / $5
Audio Zine – CD – 79 minutes
In 2002, Warren Hill found an acetate of Velvet Underground's first album for $0.75 at a garage sale. This audio zine details Warren and his friend Eric's experiences trying to drive up the value of the acetate by describing it as the "most valuable record in the world," and ultimately posting it on Ebay where it received bids up to $155,000. Erin's interviews of the two friends and their experience with the press and deadbeat bidders are honest, compelling and personal. *Life During Wartime* provides an interesting window into the world of obscure record collecting and Ebay—two areas that I'm sure *Maximum* readers are only too familiar with. One of the things that makes this story so interesting to me is the ambivalence that the friends have regarding the Velvet Underground and the need to essentially market a record made by folks that they have, at best, mixed feelings for. I've never been too fond of audio zines, but I can't imagine a better forum for this story to be told. It's put together beautifully and includes excerpts from the original recording of the acetate. (CR)

PO Box 1113 / Portland, OR 97207
erin@maximumrocknroll.com

OX FANZINE #77 / 4.50?
8.25 x 11.75 – printed – 138 pages – German
I understand this publication has been around for some time and has its past rooted in punk, but it's really stretching things calling it a fanzine. This is a full-blown glossy music magazine that looks like it belongs in the printed media section of Boarder's. 99 % is in German, yet another

language I am unable to read, but judging from the plethora of ads, this covers a sect of punk that I am not at all interested in (Anti-Flag, Millencoln, the Cute Lepers, to name a few). The design and overall feel of the magazine is very similar to *Skyscraper*'s classy and simple, yet artistic approach, with that "drowning in a shallow mess of advertisements," that *Terrorizer* and other big time metal magazines fill their pages with. Lots of glossy full-color shit going on here. The Kreator interview might be cool, but the fucking Converse ad with a line of famous people wearing Chuck Taylor's is a little too Rolling Stone-esque for a fanzine, in my opinion. (SM)

Joachim Hiller / Postfach 11 04 20 / 42664 Solingen / Germany

PICARESQUE #10 / $2

8.25 x 5.75 – copied – 20 pgs

Oh yeah! This shit is so fucking awesome and funny. *Picaresque* is an Australian zine comprised of cleverly sardonic anecdotes that will awaken in your gut either a reaction of tremorous laughter and satisfaction, or frown-y disapproval. Use this zine the next time you need to gage someone's character—if they don't like it they're probably not worth liking either. Ha ha! (CH)

17 Mayes St. / Stawell, Victoria / Australia 3380

PIG & PEEL #1 / Free or Trade

7 x 5.5 – copied – 25 pgs

This is the first issue of *Pig & Peel* and done by the author of *Mix Tapes Do It Better*. The way this personal zine is organized is certainly cool; each story starts with a lyric from a song, and the reader has to guess what song it's from and what band. The author's love of mix tapes is mentioned frequently, which sadly made me more interested in reading her other zine than this one. While the stories are easily approachable, the author's stories are sort of pointless. She rambles on about different relationships, but doesn't seem to learn much from them. This girl also seems really uptight—she writes a whole long story about how as an adolescent she felt she could not listen to any music that wasn't considered punk (I hate it when people do this, just listen to what you want! It's more "punk" to just follow your own rules!), and how she's finally over that, but she still seems to make excuses for songs she listens to now that aren't punk. Anyway, this zine does have its moments, the story she writes on bike riding and how certain songs take you back to certain times in your life were thoughtful and relatable. The other thing about this zine is that the artwork is cool, and even came with a cool hand printed card tucked into it. Not the greatest, but worth checking out again in addition the author's other zine. (MJ)

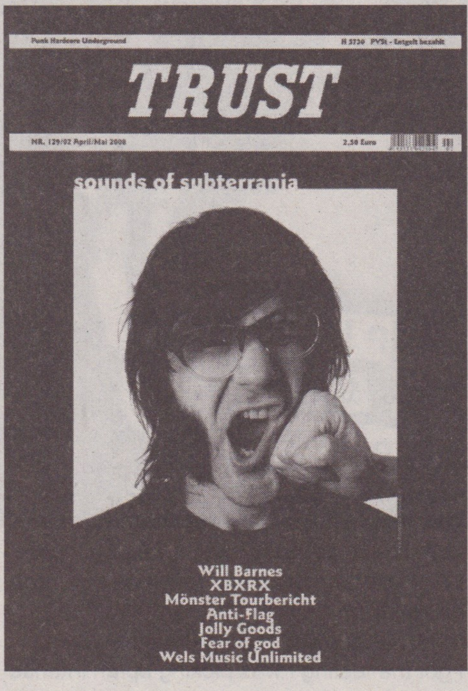
Karen Heeringa / PO Box 6912 / Grand Rapids, MI 49516

PRISON FOCUS #30 / $?

8.5 x 11 – printed – 24 pgs

Prison Focus contains tons of articles, some written by inmates and others simply about prisons. The mag is based in California and therefore tends to concentrate on state prison events. This issue contains articles about cellmates gone nuts, gender issues, the growth of federal prison spending in relation to the cuts in college funding, a visit to Pelican Bay, the parole process, etc. In addition to essays, the magazine collects articles discussing prison issues from newspapers all over the country. This issue also contains a short interview with Mumia Abu Jamal. (CI)

1904 Franklin St / Suite 507 / Oakland / CA 94612
www.prisons.org
contact@prisons.org



PUDD'N HEAD #4 / $4 or trade

8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 129 pgs

Mike *Pudd'n Head* compiles a narrative in which he takes his dog Lucius and takes off for six weeks from his life in Minneapolis, escaping the grips of mental stagnation and soured relationships. *Pudd'n Head* is a great narrative that spans states—pinballing between themes of the power (or powerlessness) of coincidence, overcoming love-sickness and social anxieties, union organizing, and the genius that is Stephen King. The coincidence theme of this zine is appropriate, because in reading it I found at least three mentions of people or places that I know either briefly or closely. Oooooh! (CH)

PO Box 7458 / Minneapolis, MN 55407
wilk0214@umn.edu

RAZORCAKE #44 / $4 ppd

8.5 x 11 – printed – 114 pgs

You already know if you like this magazine, but just in case you don't, you should get it for the killer Potential Johns interview, on account they are the most exciting thing happening in the world right now. Trust me, I just found out from reading it myself. If you don't trust me, that's cool, there's other stuff to read about like Bear Proof Suit, Los Illegals, Statues, and Svartenbrandt, plus, like one thousand columns and reviews. I was excited to see an anti-Myspace ad inside (about time!) It is my first sighting on account of being outta the loop I s'pose. (JB)

Razorcake / Gorsky Press, Inc., / PO Box 42129 / LA, CA 90042

SKIN DEEP #? / $3

8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 60 pgs

If you are into tattoos, this is a thoughtful and totally well written expose on Baltimore tattoo culture, complete with interviews across a wide spectrum of picture-fied folks. What I like about this is its honesty, people seem to be telling tales of their stupid tattoos along with the ones they are proud of, and it's telling that there are no photographs here, it isn't about macho posturing like regular tat mags. This is literary—about symbolism and storytelling and marking occasions. I really enjoyed reading this. (JB)

Eight Stone Press / PO Box 11064 / Baltimore, MD 21212
www.eightstonepress.com

SLINGSHOT #97 / $1 US, $2.50 world

11.5 x 17.5 – printed – 16 pgs

I would hope that after 97 issues people would know what to expect from *Slingshot* by now. It may only be 16 pages, it's loaded with graphics, and the text is pretty large but there is more information contained in here than *Websters*. *Slingshot* is the printed output of Berkeley's Long Haul Infoshop and Radical Library, so if you didn't know already, the writings are mostly of the political/radical/environmental/activist nature. Contained in this issue are pieces on shutting down the RNC in St. Paul, tips on personalizing your bike, an entry about being part of a bicycle protest while thinking about buying a car called "Confessions of a Fossil Fool." There are also many stories relating to local Bay Area issues like coverage of the UC Berkeley tree-sitters 18-month-and-counting fight to save an oak grove in the center of the campus from becoming a training center, the fight to stop the USDA from allowing the use of pesticide spraying to stop the spread of the light brown apple moth, and the story of Hellarity, a punk house and bay area institution facing a potential loss of their space due to a recent fire and condemnation of their space by the pigs and even bigger pigs. (JU)

Long Haul / 3124 Shattuck Ave. / Berkeley, CA 94705
www.thelonghaul.com

STRAIGHT TRIPPIN' #1 / $5 ppd
7 x 8.5 – copied – 60 pgs

This here is a one-off "DIY guide to going on tour," to quote the cover. Contained within its nicely silk-screened covers is advice on virtually everything you'd wanna know about setting off on a DIY tour. I can't think of anything that isn't at least touched upon in *Straight Trippin'*—everything from booking the tour, to being a good houseguest, to packing, right down to health/hygiene. For those that have logged many miles of open road in their quest to entertain the eager punxes of the world, most of this is probably old news but for the green horns, I think at least giving this zine a solid look through will probably answer any concerns that you might have. *Straight Trippin'* is most certainly well thought out and organized in a way that the information is in the order that you're most likely going to need it. I guess that could be considered chronological? Oh, how could I forget that it comes with a supplementary pullout listing the state-by-state laws and hours of alcohol sales with addendums on the ramifications/things you should think about regarding getting drunk on tour. Aces! (JU)

Heather F. / 1709 Goss / Oakland, CA 94607
xeroxdisasters@yahoo.com

TRUST #129 / ?
8.5 x 11 – printed – 60 pages

The German *MRR* is always good for a thumb through if you don't speak German, and absorbed reading if you do. This issue has interviews with Fear Of God (!!!), Will Barnes, Anti-Flag, Wels Music Unlimited, and more, with the requisite reviews and show info. (NM)

Postfach 11 07 02 / 28087 / Bremen / Germany

URINAL GUM #4 / $2
4.25 x 5.5 – copied- 44 pgs

I've seen the other three issues come in for review and have been curious, mostly because of the handwritten notes on the envelope that have read; "not drugs," "not anthrax" and for this issue "not nuclear." This issue of *Urinal Gum* contains a random smattering of stories about why bicyclists suck—if they had there way according to the author, "we'd all be speaking Chinese," strip clubs, queer artists, beer pong, and a great letter written to Red Bull. It's some strange stuff in this zine, but it's funny and not so obtuse as to be pretentious. (CR)

PO Box 1243 / Eugene, OR 97440
urinalgum@gmail.com

XEROGRAPHY DEBT #23 / $3
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 40 pgs

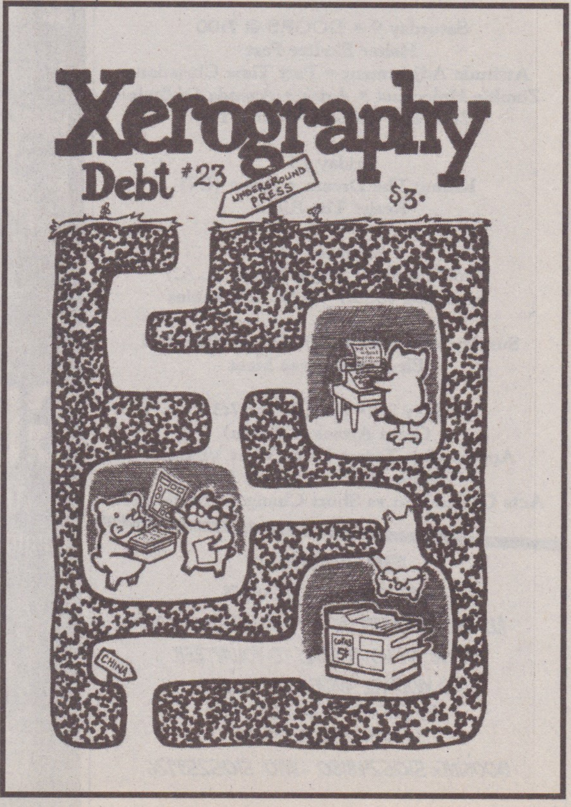
This is a cool little fanzine dedicated primarily to keeping the art of the fanzine alive and kicking. Things start off with a little commentary about how printed fanzines are dying out in favor of internet accessibility and how the majority of zine writers/readers these days tend to be primarily folks who've been around this world for over ten years or so. Sad but true. Trust me, we notice the same thing here at *MRR* and it's enough to make one wax nostalgic about days of yore when the entire world of punk communicated chiefly through the underground printed word. Fucking websites can never replace the joy of reading a zine on the bus or at a coffee shop. *Xerography Debt* continues with a column discussing how temporary art (and mail art in particular) is the only worthwhile endeavor in light of the bullshit "art as investment" trend that permeates museum/gallery culture. There's also a piece about how you can never please everyone with your writing (or music, I would also add), but how that's OK and you should just do what you like because there will be other people who totally dig what you've got to say. The rest of the issue is split up into numerous columns of zine reviews composed by an assortment of zine writers and fans, and this variety keeps the reviews interesting and fresh. I'm assuming you must be somewhat interested in the world of the printed word if you're even reading *this* review, so go ahead and order this and maybe even seek out a few of the zines they cover. It's up to us to keep it alive. (BG)

Xerography Debt c/o Davida Gypsy Breier / PO Box 11064 / Baltimore, MD 21212
davida@leekinginc.com

Z GUN #2 / $4.50
8.75 x 11.25 – printed – 55 pgs

This is a legitimate and well-executed effort in sustaining the culture of both the printed word and the vinyl record. *Z Gun* is a newsprint publication spanning genres of garage punk, electronic, and other obscure punk genres—sure to pique the interest of music buffs and record-collecting completists alike. This issue features: an interview (conducted by foreign *MRR* contributor DX) with Australians The Fabulous Diamonds, an interview with band Sightings (in 45 questions and featuring an examination of eleven of their recordings—their latest CD/LP *Through the Panama* was produced by Andrew WK!), a complex guide to bands and releases on Amphetamine Reptile records, a talk with Martijn Van Gessel of electronic record label Enfant Terrible, and some more. The review section goes on for 26 full pages, if that tells you anything about *Z Gun*'s love of lengthy and informed musings on music. (CH)

1114 21st St. / Sacramento, CA 95811
witchtrials@gmail.com
www.zgun.org



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Leif Erickson

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Saturday 16
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BARBARIC THRASH CD COMPS:Euro,CaliComps
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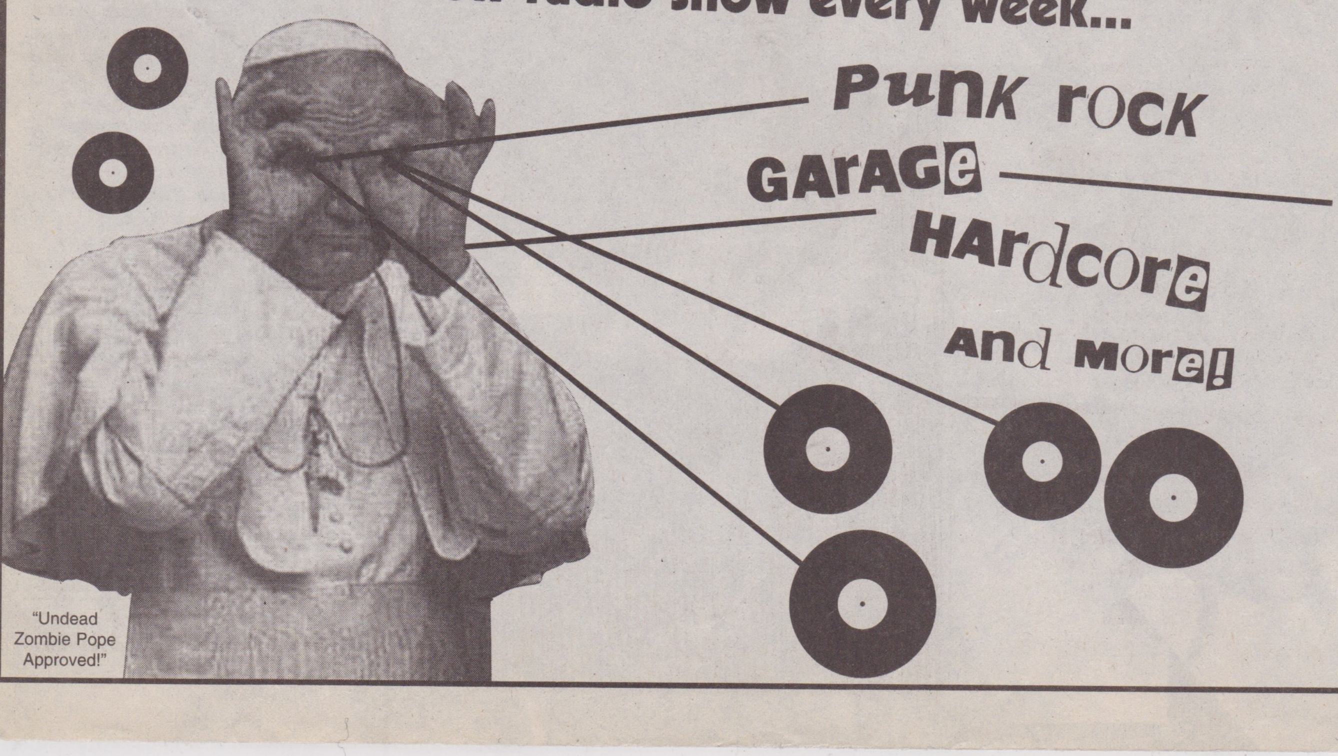

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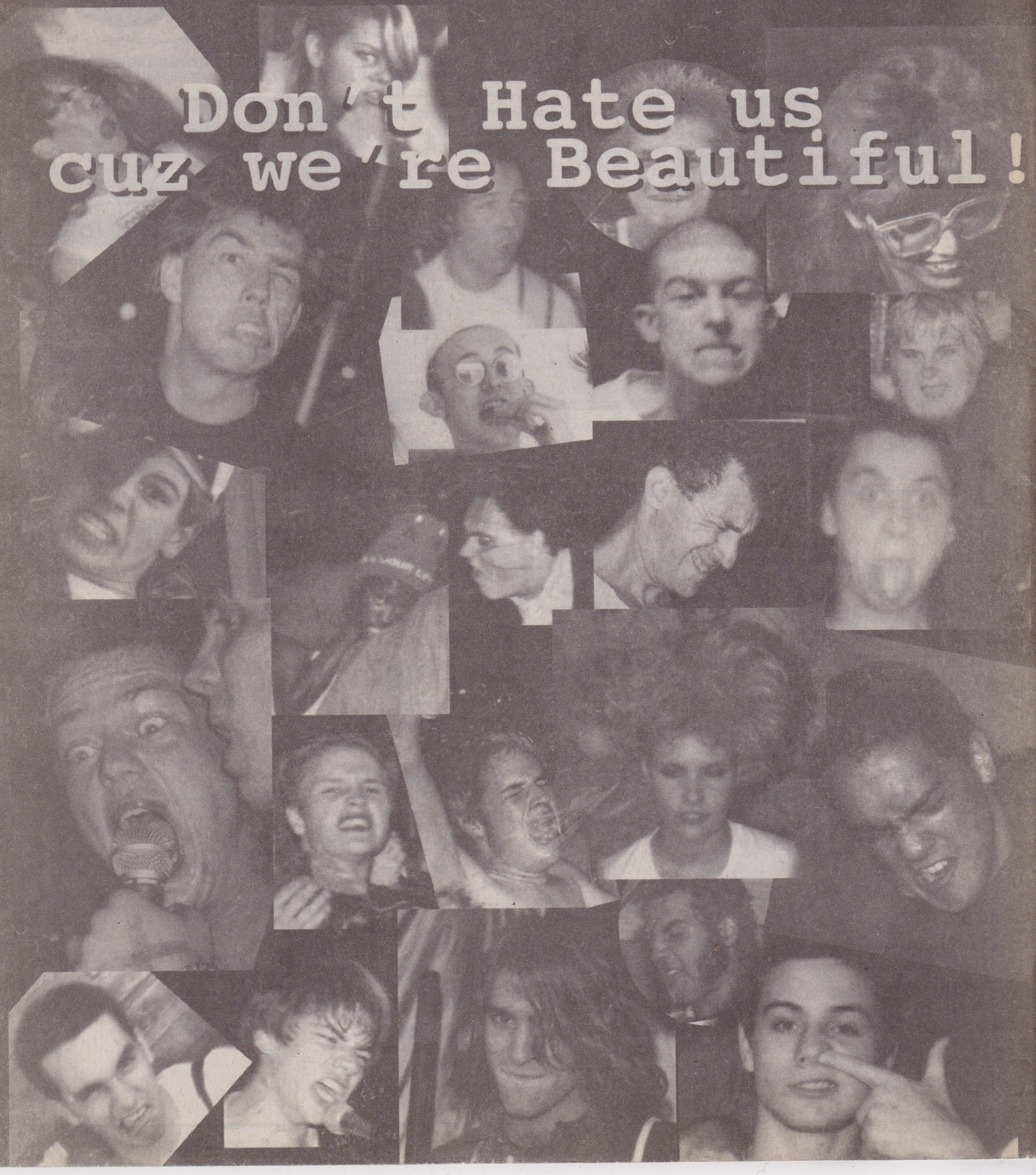
Don't Hate us
cuz we're Beautiful!